

BETWEEN URARTIAN AND ACHAEMENID ARCHITECTURAL TRADITIONS: CONSIDERATIONS ON THE SO-CALLED “URARTIAN WALL” OF ARTAŠAT

BY

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Abstract: This text is focused on the analysis of an unusual mud-brick wall discovered on the top of Hill II of the site of Artašat in the Republic of Armenia. Since the discovery of this wall, the archaeological community has made various proposals regarding its probable age. Currently it is considered to be part of a building dating to the time when the Urartian Kingdom occupied the territory of modern Armenia, in other words to the 8th or 7th century BC. We propose a new date for this building's construction, based on an evaluation of the architectural evidence; our hypothesis is that it might have been built later, when the Armenian highlands were a satrapy of the Achaemenid Empire.

Keywords: Artašat, Armenia, Urartu, Achaemenid, architecture

The present article focusses on the analysis of an unusual mud-brick wall discovered on the top of Hill II of the site of Artašat in the Republic of Armenia. Since the discovery of this wall, the archaeological community has made various proposals regarding its probable age and cultural affiliations. Currently it is considered to be part of a building dating back to the time when the Urartian Kingdom occupied the territory that is now the Republic of Armenia, in other words to the 8th or 7th century BC. It has been estimated that the Urartian fortress covered an area of 2.5-2.6 ha with a main east-west axis (Arakeljan 1982; Kanetjan 2000: 104-105; Kanetjan 2001: 149-150; Smith 2003: 258-260; Tonikyan 1992: 162, 172-173). Its Urartian foundation (Tonikyan 1992: 162) has been attributed to King Minua (about 810-785/780 BC; Biscione et al. 2002: 10; Khachatryan 1987a: 41-42) – in which case it could be the fortress of Minuaḫinili mentioned in the Tašburun inscription (CTU A 5-27)¹ – and also to Argišti I

¹ Personal communication of Yervand Grekyan to R. Dan.

(785/780-756 BC; Kanetjan 2000: 104; Kanetjan 2001: 150; Kleiss & Hauptmann 1976: 27).

The archaeological site has been excavated from 1970 onwards under the direction of B.N. Arakelyan (Arakelyan 1982: 6) and work is still in progress. The wall discussed in this text was discovered in the 1980s (Khachatryan 1987b). The fortress of Artašat², the capital of the Artaxiad dynasty founded by Artaxias I in 176 BC (Hewsen 1986: 653-654), is considered to have been built on the site of a previous settlement (Tirac'yan 1976: 135-136; Tonikyan 1996: 15; Smith 2003: 175). It is located in the Ararat plain (Pl. 1-2), close to the River Araxes, 8 km south of the modern city of Artašat, and about 1 km west of the modern village of Lusarat. The site is spread over twelve hills, locally known as the Khorvirap Hills (Tonikyan 1992: 169). It was built on a peninsula-shaped spur of land surrounded by the Araxes and marshland on three sides, and protected by a ditch on the fourth. For this reason Artašat had a geographical advantage over Armavir and Yervandašat, the previous capitals of Armenia, because it was much easier to defend; it was also closer to the international trade routes of the day (Hewsen 1986: 653).

An analysis of the wall on Hill II of Artašat

Some very interesting structures were discovered on Hill II, the highest of the hills of Artašat, about 50-55 metres above the plain. The remains were considered to be of Urartian age (Tonikyan 1992: 162, 172-173), “*in fact on the highest of the twelve hills that make up the site was an Urartian fortress with the distinctive buttressed walls that are the hallmark of Urartian fortifications*” (Khatchadourian 2007: 60). On top of this hill there was the acropolis, which included an artificial square terrace built of small stones bound with mortar; on this was later built the palace of the Arsacid king Tiridates I (Khachatryan 1998: 103), which was about 55 metres wide³. The acropolis was surrounded by a big wall with an irregular external profile and a total length of about 400 metres (Pl. 3); many parts of it have been identified. At the time of its discovery this wall was extremely well preserved, with a recorded elevation of 6-7 metres (Pl. 4). The width of the wall was 2.70 metres; it had a base made with roughly

² Coordinates: 39°52'52.82"N 44°34'27.30"E; altitude: 832 metres above sea level.

³ Dimension deduced from Khachatryan 1998: fig. 2.

squared stones, bound together with clay. There were two sizes of brick: $51.8 \times 51.8 \times 14$ cm and $51.8 \times 35 \times 14$ cm. The most important feature was the external decoration, with the presence of regularly spaced buttresses 4 metres wide that stood out 1 metre from the wall. The corners of buttresses are marked by three rabbets with steps 30 cm wide and deep. In the middle of every buttress, there was a simple rectangular recess, 1 metre wide and 30 cm deep. These recesses make the spaces between the buttresses appear as large multi-framed alcoves. The buttresses are 4 metres apart, and in the wall between two buttresses there was another niche framed with double rabbets. These niches were 1.70 metres wide with a depth of 60 cm (Khachatryan 1987b: 162; Khachatryan 1998: 99; Kanetsyan 2001: 149; Pl. 5). The external surface of the wall was originally completely plastered. The wall was also reused in later periods, especially in Hellenistic times, when 15-metre diameter circular towers were added to the original construction, replacing the original square corner towers, and a new gate was built (Khachatryan 1987b: 163; Khachatryan 1998: 103; Kanetsyan 2001: 150; Pl. 6). Unfortunately, the wall is currently in a state of abandonment and is progressively being destroyed by weathering, vandalism and illegal excavations (Pl. 7). This wall was dated to the Urartian epoch due to the presence of unspecified Urartian archaeological finds (Khachatryan 1987b: 162; Kanetsyan 2001: 149). Aminia Kanetsyan's opinion is that: "*This wall was undoubtedly built in the time of Argishti, the son of Menua (8th century BC)*" (Kanetsyan 2001: 150). It was compared to a bronze model of a building discovered in Toprakkale and a little ivory model of a tower discovered in Karmir-blur, both of which possessed rabbets. It is, however, immediately evident that direct comparisons between these two objects and the wall of Artašat are unjustified; the first represents part of a building (a palace, a temple, or a fortification?) with simple profiled walls with widely spaced buttresses or towers and a recess that houses three rabbeted windows. The second is simply the model of a tower, similar to that represented by the bronze model from Toprakkale. In fact, the use of rabbets was very widespread in Iron Age Mesopotamia and Iran, as also in Urartu (Roaf 1998). The two Urartian models are generic portrayals of buildings that can hardly be used to date the Artašat wall. It has been suggested that the wall was a sort of prototype of the Achaemenid period walls of Persepolis (Kanetsyan 2001: 150). With regard to the construction technique, it should be noted that the use of a stone base with a mud-brick standing wall is typical of Urartian architecture; less so

the use of clay as a binding agent. As mentioned, these mud-bricks ($51.8 \times 51.8 \times 14$ cm and $51.8 \times 35 \times 14$ cm) are very similar in size to the mud-bricks excavated in Karmir-blur ($51.8 \times 51.8 \times 14.9$ cm and $51.8 \times 35 \times 14.9$ cm), Armavir ($51.8 \times 51.8 \times 14.9$ cm), and Aragats ($51.8 \times 51.8 \times 14.8$ cm and $51.8 \times 35 \times 14.8$ cm), all Urartian period sites located in modern Armenia. It is however important to underline that among the Urartian sites, despite similarities, none in eastern Turkey or Iranian Azerbaijan have bricks of these dimensions⁴, so we hypothesize the presence of a local variant in Armenia with respect to Urartian brick sizes. Although Urartian occupation of the site cannot be excluded, no distinctively Urartian finds are recognisable among the published material from the excavations conducted on the site.

Parallels for the Artašat wall

There is currently no reason to think that the Artašat wall was part of an Urartian building. No archaeological material from Urartian times that can help us to date the structure has been published. The only features shared with traditional Urartian architecture are the general construction technique – with the use of a stone foundation and a mud-brick standing wall, a feature that can also be seen in post-Urartian architecture – and the dimensions of the unfired bricks. Urartian bricks are generally similar in size, but if we look carefully at their dimensions⁵, it is difficult to identify a type that can be defined as purely Urartian⁶, also because in most cases we do not know the measurements of bricks used in later periods, and many Urartian sites had later occupations often not recognised by the excavators⁷. For these reasons, brick dimensions cannot be used as reliable chronological indicators. The insistent use of niches and buttresses in the Artašat wall would appear to be of clearly Iranian derivation. As mentioned, this kind of wall decoration is unknown in Urartian architecture and art, while walls with similar features can be recognised in post-Urartian

⁴ For the measurements of Urartian mud-bricks, see Dan 2012: 87 and Dan & Vitolo 2016: 108.

⁵ For the measurements of Urartian bricks, see Dan & Vitolo 2016: 108.

⁶ For example, in Bastam five different bricks are attested.

⁷ Such as in the Erebuni fortress in Armenia.

times, especially in the “Median”⁸ and Achaemenid periods. In most of the currently known sites which can be attributed to the “Median” Empire, such as Nush-i Jan, Godin Tepe and Gūnespān-e Patappeh in Iran and Ulug Depe in Turkmenistan, the use of buttresses, sometimes decorated with rabbits, is quite common. However, much more than specimens from “Median” sites, Achaemenid period walls closely resemble the Artašat wall. Indeed, in Persepolis the external walls of the Treasury (Schmidt 1953: 156-200) show a very similar architectural pattern, with regularly alternating buttresses and recesses, and are entirely built using sun-dried bricks (Pl. 8-10). Each buttress is marked in the middle by an arrow-shaped slot that is 2.80 to 2.97 metres wide. In the space between the buttresses, there are niches that are 2.60 to 2.65 metres wide framed by recesses of about 17 cm in width (Pl. 11). The bricks used for the construction of the Treasury are square in shape, 32 to 34 cm across and 12 to 13 cm thick (Schmidt 1953: 158-159, figs. 69A, 74C-E, 82, 84). The wall of the Persepolis Treasury and the Artašat wall share similar general features regarding their architectural composition, despite size differences; the components of the Artašat wall (buttresses, recesses and bricks) are bigger than those of the other, but the proportions between the architectural features (buttresses and recesses) are similar (Pl. 12). Given the absence of any reliable dating indicators for the wall of Artašat, only the architectural features may help in its interpretation. As mentioned, the wall does not closely resemble any known Urartian building, while similar walls are attested in Achaemenid architecture, especially in the Treasury of Persepolis. We suggest that the Artašat wall was constructed when the Armenian highland was included in the Armina satrapy of the Achaemenid Empire, in a period between the 6th and 4th centuries BC, when the Orontid dynasty reigned over these territories. The wall of Artašat cannot be considered to have been built directly by an Achaemenid ruler due to the presence of many “local features”, such as the brick sizes that are typical for the area, and the use of a stone base with a sun-dried brick standing wall, as was usual in that territory. The Artašat wall, like almost all of the Achaemenid structures

⁸ Behind this label are hidden delicate historical and archaeological questions of difficult solution which have long been debated. The idea that a Median Empire ever existed has been repeatedly called into question by various scholars since the 1980s, see lastly Rossi 2010. Similarly, doubt has been cast on the actual existence of a Median cultural heritage that allegedly merged into the Achaemenid state (Rossi 2010: 311-312). In this paper all references to Median culture are put in inverted commas.

discovered in the Armenian Highlands, does not show pure “Persepolitan” features. It was presumably the result of an attempt by a local satrap to imitate the architecture of Achaemenid capital cities, in this case Persepolis, according to a dynamic of imitation between centre and province that recurred at various times. This hypothesis is supported by the discovery on the site of the Late Achaemenid pottery known as Western Triangle Ware (Kroll 2000: 132, 135; Kroll 2003: 285).

Conclusions

The Artasat wall has been usually considered as proof of Urartian occupation of the site. However, the absence of any close similarity between this wall and the Urartian walls currently known has led to reconsideration of the structure’s date. On the basis of comparisons with buildings in Persepolis, it could be an Achaemenid wall, part of a large unknown structure which may be added to the short list of the Achaemenid period structures attested in modern-day Armenia⁹. However, more archaeological investigation is needed to clarify the date of this enigmatic complex, which has undoubtedly nothing in common with the Urartian mud-brick walls already known. In general, an Urartian period occupation of Artasat cannot be ruled out¹⁰, but further research is needed to demonstrate its existence conclusively.

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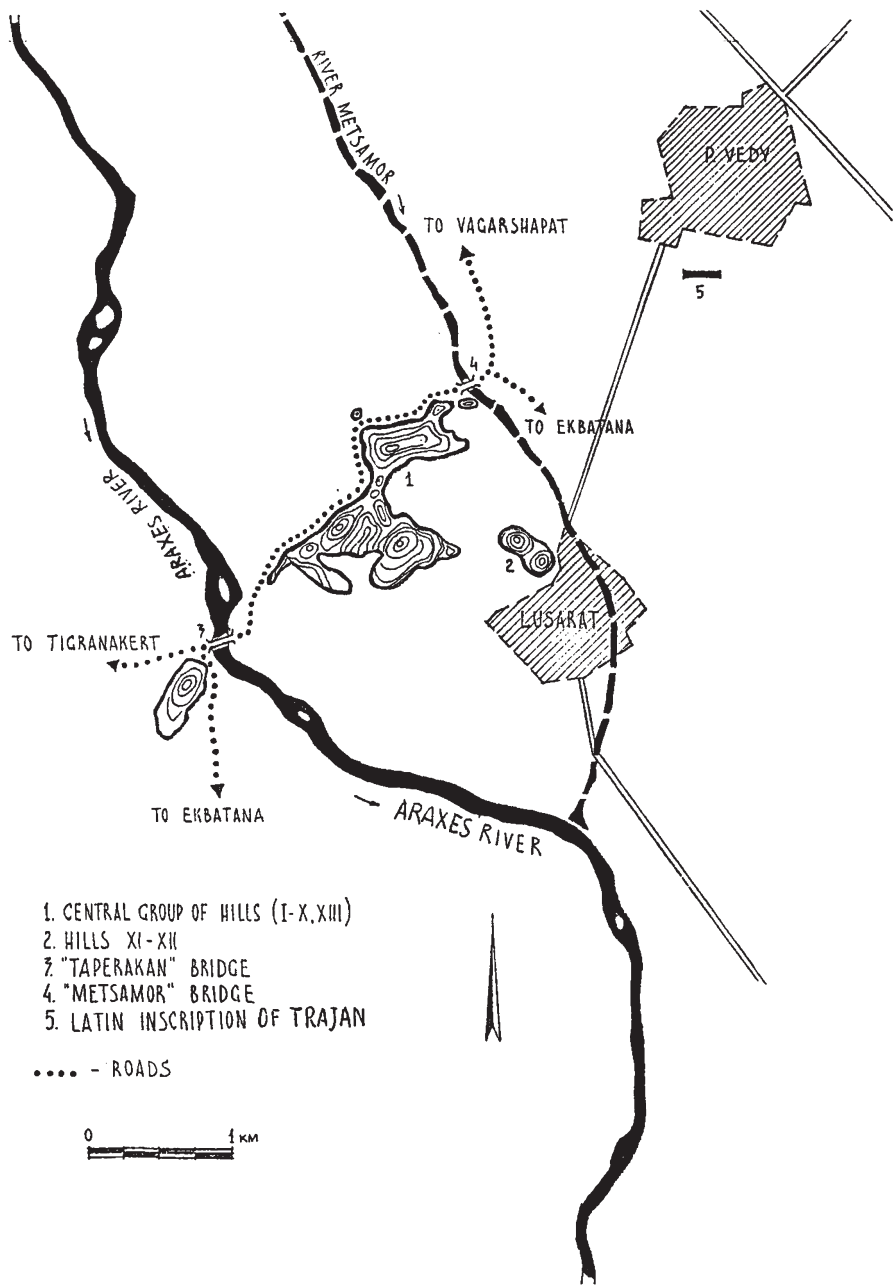
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⁹ For a recent summary of the Achaemenid sites in Southern Caucasus, see Herles 2017.

¹⁰ Tonikyan and Kanetsyan underlined the presence of an Urartian period house in this site (Tonikyan 1996: fig. 7; Kanetsyan 1998: 41, fig. 32).

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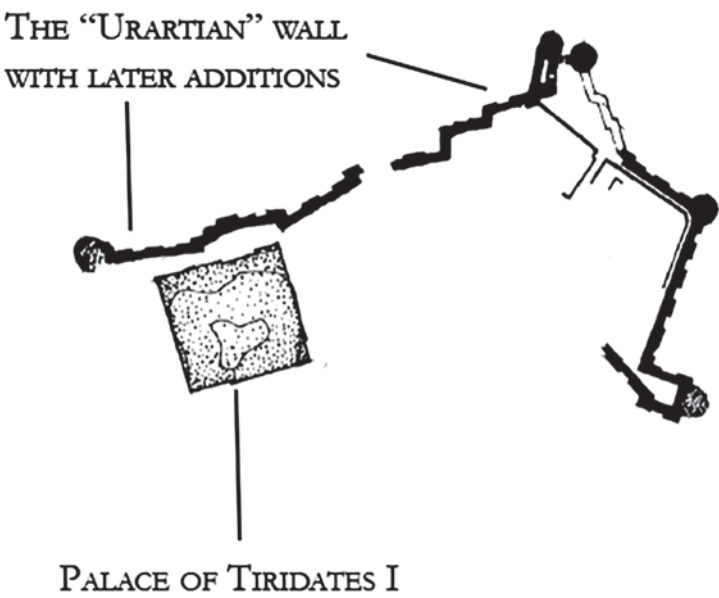
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Pl. 1. Map showing the location of Artašat (after Tonikyan 1992: fig. B).



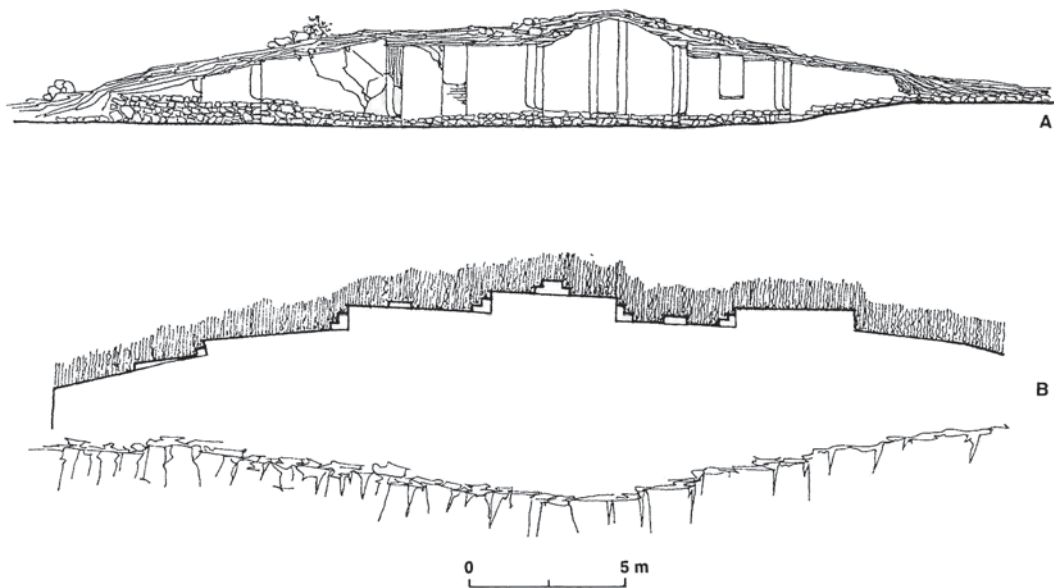
Pl. 2. The hills of Artashat (after Tonikyan 1992: fig. C).



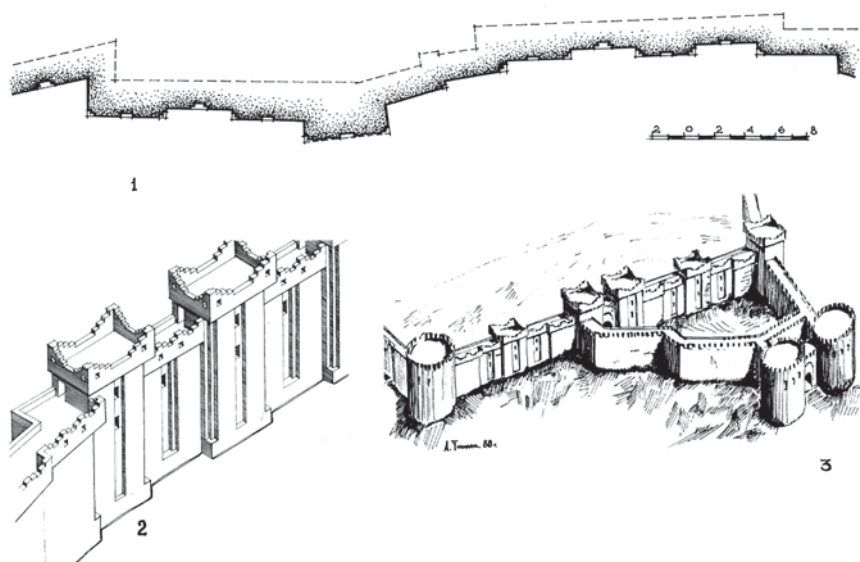
Pl. 3. Artašat. The so-called 'Uartian wall' with the palace of Tiridates (modified by R. Dan, after Khachatryan 1998: fig. 2).



Pl. 4. Artašat. The so-called 'Uartian wall' (after Khachatryan 1998: fig. 4).



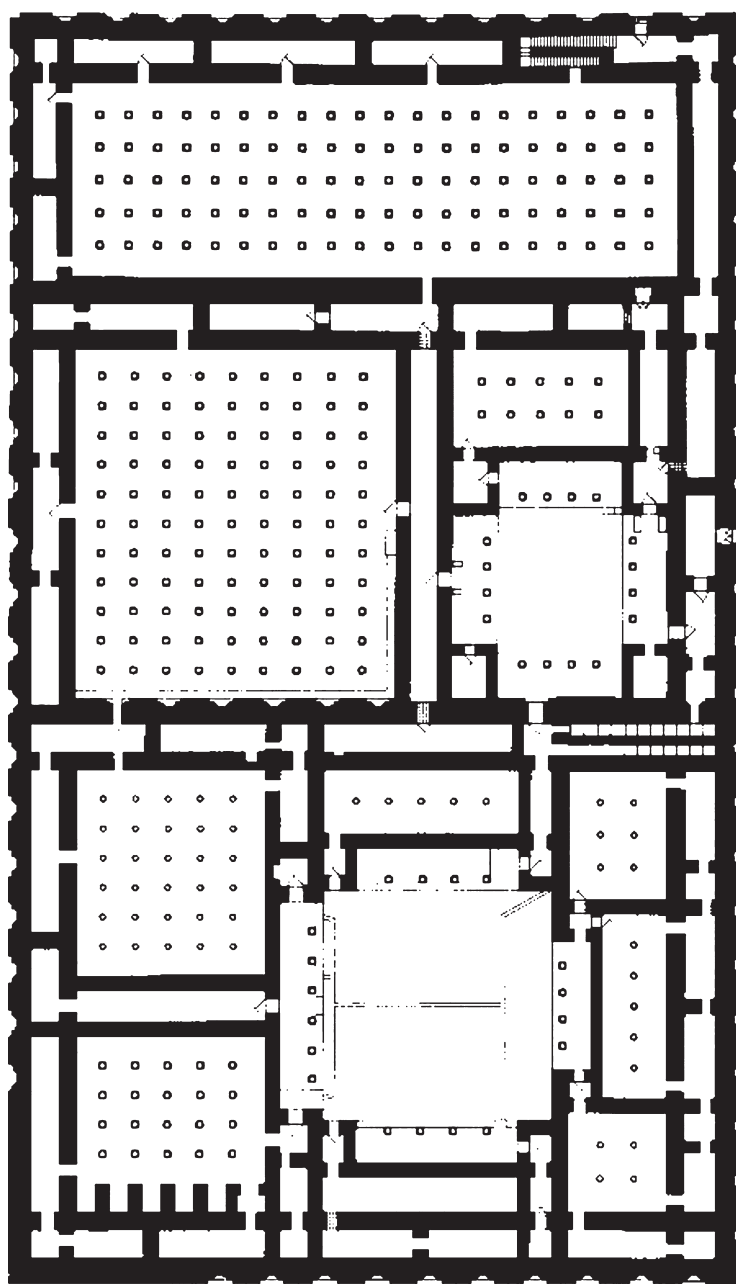
Pl. 5. Artašat. The so-called 'Uartian wall': A) elevation; B) plan
(after Kanetsyan 2000: fig. 2).



Pl. 6. Artašat. The so-called 'Uartian wall': 1) plan; 2-3) hypothetical reconstruction
(after Khachatryan 1998: fig. 3).



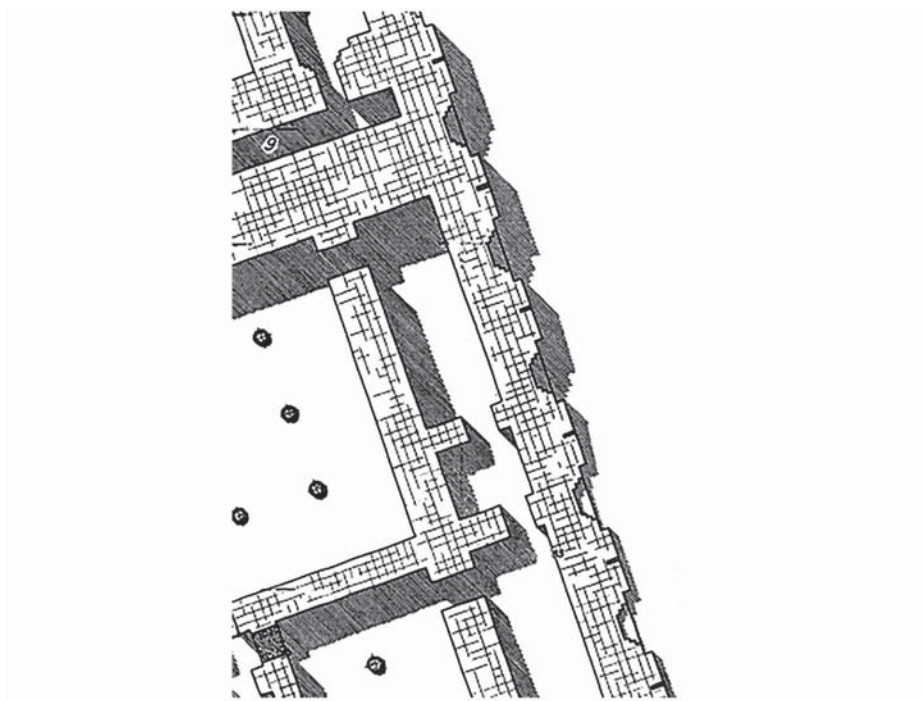
Pl. 7. The current state of the so-called 'Urtian wall' of Artasat
(photo by R. Dan 2012).



Pl. 8. Persepolis. Plan of the Treasury (after Schmidt 1953: fig. 65).



Pl. 9. Persepolis. Eastern wall of the Treasury (after Schmidt 1953: fig. 74e).



Pl. 10. Persepolis. Eastern wall of the Treasury (modified by R. Dan after Schmidt 1953: 82).

A LATE 4TH - EARLY 3RD MILLENNIUM BC GRAVE AT SPIDEJ (EASTERN JAZMURIAN, IRANIAN BALUCHISTAN)

BY

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Abstract: We present here the results of the excavation in 2003 of the most furnished grave found in Spidej (grave 125), in Eastern Jazmurian area (Iranian Baluchistan). Probably dated around 3000 BC (3200-2800 BC), it displays a funerary assemblage of 59 pottery, copper-alloy and stone artefacts mostly unknown up to now, except for the very partially published excavation in Bampur 14 / Saidabad led by Mehdi Rahbar in 2003.

Keywords: Spidej, Bampur, Jazmurian basin, Baluchistan, Bronze Age

Introduction

The archaeological site of Spidej (N 27°39'14"; E 59°59'26"; 714 m asl; see figs. 1 and 2) is located on the north-eastern fringe of the Jazmurian basin, some 55 km south of Bazman volcano, in the upper part of an alluvial conoid, nearby the junction of the floodplain with the mountain. Due to local volcanic activity, the site is surrounded by many hot springs.

After the report of illegal excavations going on in Spidej in 2001/1380 (probably inspired by the looters who had just started to be active in the Jiroft area at that time), M. Heydari (ICCHTO Sistan-Baluchistan) spent there 3 rescue campaigns in summer 2002/1381 (14 days), in summer 2003/1382 (103 days) and summer 2005/1384 (25 days)¹ among the still active plunderers. The conditions were not secure, and the rescue operations had to be carried out faster than one would have wished.

In 2002, a survey was made around the site, in a strip of 40 km in length and 2 km wide, during which 18 sites, mainly prehistoric, were discovered.

¹ With the help of Reza Ganjali, Mohammad Reza Mollashai, Ahmad Rezasheikhi, Hossein Pourmand and Mehdi Minaei.

The material found on the surface of the site and in the looting pits was also recovered and systematically recorded. Because of its bad preservation, one grave (n° 101), not disturbed, was also excavated in order to get a first insight on the local material culture and dating of the site.

In 2003, 37 other graves were excavated (Graves 102-138), including Grave 125 which is the main topic of this paper. Spidej was also recorded as a national monument (*asar melli*) while a watching station with a guard was built to protect the site from further destructions that could have been planned at night time. In 2005, the extent of the site was determined through a systematic series of test trenches, while a preliminary topographic map was drawn². The archaeological materials collected during these seasons in the site are currently held in the Museums of Zahedan and Chabahar.

Occupation periods at Spidej (see Pl. 2)

Through this rescue work, several occupation periods could be determined in Spidej, including:

- a graveyard dating from the late 4th / early 3rd millennium BC to the 2nd half of the 3rd millennium BC (Graveyard A), as suggested by the abundant ceramics scattered on surface by the looters, and there recovered (see below); Grave 125 belongs to this graveyard and can be ascribed to its earliest occupation, around 3000 BC;
- a late 3rd / early 2nd millennium BC graveyard (Graveyard B) according to the ceramics found there, distinguished by a peculiar incised decoration and displaying abundant comparisons with Shahdad;
- a probable Parthian graveyard (with *damb*, or dry-stone tumulus structure);
- and some Islamic remains, including notably a fortress (qalehye Spidej; Spidej is actually a deformation of *sepid dej*, “The white fortress”) and a contemporaneous graveyard.

Description of graveyards A and B

The destructions caused by previous illegal excavations (at least 200 vertical looting pits as well as horizontal tunnels spoiled the site) had deeply

² See Heydari 2006/1385 for a preliminary report concerning Spidej.

disturbed the site. Moreover, the actual presence of armed looters during the official rescue activity limited the time of the dig and may have prevented the recovery of important details. Only well preserved (non-looted) graves were chosen for excavation, 30 in graveyard A, and 8 in graveyard B (38 all in all, from Grave 101 to 138).

Graveyard A

Graveyard A is located in the northern part of the Spidej basin (Pl. 2). Some graves were actually found from the present surface thanks to the still visible structures used to mark them, aligned cobbles forming squares (with sides of 3,5 to 4,5 m) or circles (3,5 to 4,5 m in diameter). These funerary constructions might have marked the original trampling surface of the cemetery, and are currently exposed by strong erosion, that locally removes one or more later alluvial layers, in some places 1 to 1,5 m thick.

Two types of graves were recorded: simple pit graves and catacomb-like ones. Simple pit graves displayed a round or oval pit which, once filled, was covered with 5 to 7 stone slabs. Considering their funerary furniture, these graves were relatively 'poor', often containing only few ceramic vessels. However, being quite visible on surface, these graves had frequently been excavated and looted, disturbing most of the original layout and breaking the vessels.

Catacomb-like graves consisted in a round or oval pit closed with stone slabs, giving access to a chamber, sometimes closed also with slabs. Probably belonging to a more affluent part of the Bronze age society, these graves were more furnished than the simple pits and showed more variety in their assemblages: copper alloy artefacts (circular mirrors, pins, daggers, axes and compartmented stamps seals; on this last type of artefacts, see Heydari, Desset & Vidale 2018: seals n° 1, 2, 8, 12, 28 and 29, presented in this paper as coming from graveyard B), alabaster, chlorite, carnelian and lapis-lazuli beads, marble vessels and well-known but still mysterious small stone columns (three specimens found). These tombs and their goods were usually better preserved, perhaps because their deeper shaft and better construction protected the artefacts from rain infiltration and from the pressure of the closing slabs.

Considering the similarity of their ceramic assemblages, both these types of graves were probably used at the same time. As stated above, they can be preliminary dated between the late 4th / early 3rd millennium and

the second half of the 3rd millennium BC. The earliest graves (like 125, see below) were furnished with well fired / clinky fine mineral tempered grey/buff/orange ware, usually decorated with dark grey to black painted geometric patterns. This fine ware comes in few different shapes with many variations including hemispherical bowls (with different sizes), less common bowls with straight walls and small restricted goblets or low beakers with a distinctive, monotonous linear design. The best comparisons for these materials are with the pottery found in the Saidabad graveyard (Bampur 14), excavated by Mehdi Rahbar in 2003 (see below the comparisons section), and published in Persian.

Some graves were probably more recent and, when properly studied, might be ascribed to the second half of the 3rd millennium BC, because of characteristic ceramic shapes such as the “scorpion bowls” (contemporary with Shahr-i Sokhta Period III and Konar Sandal South settlement), incised grey ware, globular vessels with tubular spout (found also in Shahdad and Mahtoutabad graveyards; see for example Desset et al. 2017: vessel n° i), pear-shaped beakers (cf. Shahr-I Sokhta Period II, phases 5A-5B, around 2600-2500 BC), high footed cups (found at the looted cemetery site of Mahtoutabad and recovered in other plundered sites of the Halil basin) and the use of excised, string-shaped decorative patterns below the rim reminding of similar pottery found at Chegerdak (Heydari et al. 2015: fig. 5, n° g). To these elements, we might add some carved (scorpion) chlorite vessel fragments (still unpublished), the small stone columns and a small copper alloy dog which finds precise parallels in Gonur Depe (ca 2200-2000 BC). In the whole, the fine grey ware still remained the most common funerary furniture of this second phase, nevertheless displaying more frequently animal decorative patterns than in the previous centuries.

Graveyard B

Located in the western part of the Spidej basin, graveyard B is distinguished by stone-built gable roof graves. Eight graves of this kind could be excavated. The ceramics found here differ completely from those of graveyard A and may be ascribed to the late 3rd / early 2nd millennium BC. They were usually rougher, with reddish to orange paste. While vessels have almost no painted decorative pattern, they were incised with some

interesting (and still unpublished) tree, human, solar or triangular-shaped figures and frequently stamp-sealed (cf. Heydari, Desset & Vidale 2018: sealings n° 1 to 19, presented in this paper as coming from graveyard A). The closest comparisons available are with Konar Sandal North, Shahdad, Tepe Yahya IVA and Shahr-i Sokhta III-IV. The material recovered here includes also chlorite vessels fragments with geometric designs and some marble vessels. In general, graves from graveyard B were not as rich as in graveyard A. Some of them had also been looted in antiquity. A settlement possibly associated to this graveyard was located 3 km south-eastward, in the Pir Sohran valley, where similar sherds as well as some evidence of stone architecture could be observed.

Grave 125 (Graveyard A): excavation and stratigraphy

We chose to publish Grave 125 because it had not been disturbed by looters, displayed the most abundant funerary furniture of the entire cemetery, with not less than 59 artefacts (52 ceramics, four copper alloy/bronze artefacts, and three stone finds) and document an up to now rather poorly known period, around 3000 BC. The grave is located at 711 m asl, in the north-eastern part of graveyard A, and its coordinates are N 27°39'14"; E 59°59'27".

The trench where Grave 125 was found measured 2 × 2 m. The first 15 cm (layer 1) were filled with a mix of loose dirt and sherds. From 15 cm to a depth of 80 cm (layer 2, 65 cm thick), the excavators found loose dirt and stones, and no potsherds. At the depth of 80 cm, two large stone slabs were encountered, which closed the pit of a grave. The 3rd millennium BC surface of the graveyard was probably immediately above. From 80 cm to 185 cm (for a thickness of 105 cm), layer 3 was the filling of a vertical pit, distinguished by a very loose sediment mixed with sand. The vertical shaft, thus cleared, gave access to a lateral chamber (a catacomb-like grave), where, from a depth of ca. 185 to 210 cm (layer 4), the furnishings (59 artefacts) of Grave 125 had been deposited with the dead (see Pl. 3 and Pl. 4). Unfortunately, no bone remains survived in the chamber, perhaps due, as stated above, to the fluctuations of the water table, and the position of the body can be only guessed (see below).

Description and catalogue of the grave assemblage

The 59 artefacts found in the chamber (see Pl. 5 to 22) are currently kept in two Museums³. In Zahedan part of the assemblage is at present on the general exhibit, in showcases which could not be opened during our study. Thus, although we had good pictures and drawings of almost all the assemblage and as we tried to present each object with standard graphic reproductions and the relative pictures, in the following catalogue are some inconsistencies. For example, of artefacts 125/37 and 125/58 we have no documentation; of 125/7 there is only one picture, while 125/14 lacks a photograph. Part of the assemblage was materially at our disposal: these are the vessels whose colours (paste and pigments) are recorded with the Munsell soil cards. The finds which were not directly accessible are those described, in the following catalogue, with more generic colour descriptions and less technological details.

Id.	Plates	Description	Ware & Texture	Colour(s)	Forming Technique	Other Technical Features
125/1	Pl. 15 and 16	slightly restricted beaker, painted	buff/orange ware, very fine	pink-orange, pigment dark brown	wheel-thrown	trimmed on the lower body and base
125/2	Pl. 17 and 18	subcylindrical bowl, painted	buff ware, fine	7.5YR8/1 (light grey) pigment 7.5YR3/1 (black)	wheel-thrown	trimmed on the lower body and base
125/3	Pl. 17 and 18	small restricted jar with a short neck, a truncated cone-like neck and a spout (not preserved), painted	medium-fine red-orange ware	5YR7/6 (orange) pigment 5YR6/1 (brownish grey)	coiled and wheel-fashioned (?)	-
125/4	Pl. 15 and 16	slightly restricted beaker, painted	buff/orange ware, very fine	5YR7/3 (dull orange) pigment 5YR7/1 (black)	wheel-thrown	trimmed on the base
125/5	Pl. 17 and 18	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware, fine	10YR5/2 (greyish brown), pigment 10YR3/1 (black)	wheel-thrown	trimmed on the lower body and base

³ We want to thank here Ms. Atefe Bazzi, Ms. Samira Naroui and Ms. Somaye Dorakzadeh for their collaboration in drawing the ceramics.

Id.	Plates	Description	Ware & Texture	Colour(s)	Forming Technique	Other Technical Features
125/6	Pl. 7 and 8	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware, fine	7.5YR5/1 (brownish grey) pigment 7.5YR7/1 (black)	wheel-thrown (?)	multiple stages of trimming or slow turning, alternating with sets of oblique spatula impressions
125/7	Pl. 16	small biconical jar, unpainted	grey ware, medium-fine	5YR7/1 (light grey)	probably coiled	-
125/8	Pl. 15 and 16	small biconical jar, unpainted	grey ware, medium-fine	5YR5/2 (reddish grey)	wheel-thrown	trimmed on the lower body; below the maximum expansion, entirely covered by a continuous series of chattering marks
125/9	Pl. 15 and 16	slightly restricted beaker, painted	buff/orange ware, very fine	7.5YR7/4 (dull orange) pigment 7.5YR3/2 (brownish black)	wheel-thrown	trimmed on the base, interior oxidised
125/10	Pl. 15 and 16	flat biconical jar	coarse grey ware	5YR7/1 (light grey)	probably coiled	-
125/11	Pl. 15 and 16	small biconical jar, unpainted	grey ware	7.5YR7/1 (light grey)	probably coiled	heavily burnished with spiral movements, trimmed on the lower exterior body
125/12	Pl. 15 and 16	Slightly restricted beaker, painted	buff/orange ware, very fine	yellowish-orange, pigment black	wheel-thrown	-
125/13	Pl. 7 and 8	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware, fine	7.5YR7/1 (light brownish grey) pigment 5YR3/1 (brownish black)	coiled and wheel-thrown	chattering marks on the exterior, signs of a spatula inside; turned on the lower body and the base
125/14	Pl. 7 and 8	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware	5YR8/1 (light brownish grey) pigment 7.5YR3/2 (brownish black)	wheel-thrown	paddled with a spatula, trimmed on the base

Id.	Plates	Description	Ware & Texture	Colour(s)	Forming Technique	Other Technical Features
125/15	Pl. 9 and 10	small, squat jar, unpainted	grey ware, fine	7.5YR7/1 (light brownish grey)	probably coiled	trimmed and slightly burnished on the lower exterior body
125/16	Pl. 7 and 8	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware, fine	7.5YR7/2 (light brownish grey) pigment 7.5YR4/3 (brown)	Wheel-thrown (?)	trimmed on the base
125/17	Pl. 5 and 6	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey to buff ware, very fine	7.5YR8/3 (light yellowish orange) pigment 7.5YR3/1 (brownish black)	wheel-thrown	extensively padded on the exterior with rhythmic spatula marks; trimmed on the base
125/18	Pl. 19 and 20	hemispherical bowl with restricted mouth and narrow base, painted	medium-fine black-on-red slipped ware (?)	bright red-orange slip, dark grey to black slip	probably coiled	lower body trimmed or turned
125/19	Pl. 19 and 20	large subglobular necked jar, painted	buff/orange ware, medium-fine	pinkish buff, pigment dark grey	probably coiled and wheel-fashioned	trimmed and smoothed on lower body and base
125/20	Pl. 13 and 14	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware, fine	5YR7/2 (light brownish grey) pigment 7.5YR7/4 (dull brown)	wheel-thrown	finely trimmed on the base; ghost marks of the decoration of another vessel, from the same pile
125/21	Pl. 15 and 16	small subglobular jar, painted	buff/orange ware, very fine	2.5Y7/4 (pale reddish orange) pigment 2.5Y4/3 (dull reddish brown)	wheel-thrown	trimmed on the base
125/22	Pl. 15 and 16	small subglobular jar, painted	buff/orange ware, very fine	reddish orange, pigment dark reddish brown	wheel-thrown	trimmed at the lower body and base
125/23	Pl. 15 and 16	slightly restricted beaker, painted	buff ware, very fine	2.5YR7/4 (orange) pigment 2.5YR4/1 (reddish grey)	wheel-thrown	turned on the base
125/24	Pl. 17 and 18	small truncated cone-like bowl, painted	grey ware, fine	7.5YR8/1 (light grey) pigment 7.5YR3/1 (black)	wheel-thrown	trimmed at the lower body and base

Id.	Plates	Description	Ware & Texture	Colour(s)	Forming Technique	Other Technical Features
125/25	Pl. 9 and 10	hemispherical bowl	grey ware, very fine	7.5YR6/2 (greyish brown) pigment 7.5YR3/1 (brownish black)	coiled and wheel-fashioned	entirely turned and smoothed on the exterior; oblique spatula marks on the outer rim
125/26	Pl. 9 and 10	small hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware, very fine	pinkish grey, pigment greyish black	wheel-thrown	-
125/27	Pl. 11 and 12	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware, fine	brownish grey, pigment greyish black	wheel-thrown	-
125/28	Pl. 15 and 16	slightly restricted beaker, painted	buff/orange ware, very fine	2.5YR7/4 (pale reddish orange) pigment 2.5YR7/1 (reddish black)	wheel-thrown	interior oxidised
125/29	Pl. 13 and 14	hemispherical bowl	grey ware, very fine	5YR8/1 (light grey) pigment 5YR4/2 (greyish brown)	wheel-thrown (?)	lower body and base are heavily trimmed with chattering marks at the maximum expansion
125/30	Pl. 17 and 18	truncated-cone like bowl, painted	buff/orange ware, fine, slightly porous	7.5YR8/3 (light yellowish orange) pigment 7.5YR5/1 (brownish grey)	coiled and wheel-fashioned	lower exterior part slightly polished
125/31	Pl. 5 and 6	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware, fine	light brown to grey, pigment dark brown	wheel-thrown (?)	-
125/32	Pl. 15 and 16	slightly restricted beaker, painted	buff ware, very fine	7.5YR8/3 (light yellowish orange) pigment 7.5YR7/1 (black)	wheel-thrown	turned on the base
125/33	Pl. 15 and 16	slightly restricted beaker, painted	buff/orange ware, very fine	5YR7/6 (orange) pigment 5YR4/3 (dull reddish brown)	wheel-thrown	lower body and base turned
125/34	Pl. 11 and 12	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey to buff ware, fine	yellowish brown, pigment reddish brown	wheel-thrown (?)	-
125/35	Pl. 9 and 10	hemispherical bowl, painted	buff/orange ware, fine	7.5YR8/3 (light yellowish orange) pigment 5YR5/3 (dull reddish brown)	wheel-thrown	paddled with a spatula, trimmed on the base

Id.	Plates	Description	Ware & Texture	Colour(s)	Forming Technique	Other Technical Features
125/36	Pl. 13 and 14	sub-cylindrical bowl, painted	buff/orange ware, very fine	5YR8/3 (pale brown-orange) pigment 2.5YR6/6 (orange)	wheel-thrown	trimmed on the base
125/38	Pl. 15 and 16	slightly restricted beaker, painted	buff/orange ware, very fine	yellowish-orange, pigment dark brown to black	wheel-thrown	trimmed on the base
125/37	Not documented, see map	slightly restricted beaker, painted (?)	-	-	-	-
125/39	Pl. 5	hemispherical bowl, painted	buff ware, fine	yellowish-orange, pigment dark brown	wheel-thrown	-
125/40	Pl. 15 and 16	small subglobular jar, painted	buff/orange ware, fine	7.5YR7/4 (dull orange) pigment 7.5YR4/1 (brownish grey)	wheel-thrown	trimmed on the lower body
125/41	Pl. 13 and 14	small hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware, very fine	7.5YR7/2 (light brownish grey) pigment 7.5YR3/1 (brownish black)	wheel-thrown	trimmed on the lower body and base
125/42	Pl. 13 and 14	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware, very fine	10YR7/1 (light grey) pigment 7.5YR3/2 (brownish black)	coiled, fashioned on the potter's wheel	lower body and base trimmed or turned (?)
125/43	Pl. 13 and 14	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey to buff ware, very fine	5YR7/2 (light brownish grey) pigment 7.5YR4/2 (greyish brown)	coiled and wheel-fashioned	entirely turned or trimmed with spiral-like movements, but on rim
125/44	Pl. 5 and 6	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware, very fine	Light pinkish grey, pigment dark brown	wheel-thrown (?)	trimmed on lower body and base
125/45	Pl. 13 and 14	low hemispherical bowl	grey ware, very fine	7.5YR7/2 (light brownish grey) pigment 7.5YR2.5/1 (black)	wheel-thrown (?)	trimmed on lower body and base
125/46	Pl. 15 and 16	slightly restricted beaker, painted	buff ware, very fine	yellowish buff, pigment dark grey	wheel-thrown	-

Id.	Plates	Description	Ware & Texture	Colour(s)	Forming Technique	Other Technical Features
125/47	Pl. 19 and 20	large globular necked jar, painted	buff/orange ware, fine		coiled and fashioned on the potter's wheel; upper body enlarged by paddle and anvil	trimmed and smoothed on lower body and base
125/48	Pl. 17 and 18	squat subglobular restricted jar, painted	medium-fine red-orange ware	red-orange, pigment dark grey	coiled, wheel-fashioned (?)	-
125/49	Pl. 17 and 18	small hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware, fine	7.5YR7/2 (light brownish grey) pigment 7.5YR3/1 (brownish black)	wheel-thrown	-
125/50	Pl. 13 and 14	hemispherical bowl, painted	grey ware	10YR7/1 (light grey) pigment 10YR3/3 (dark brown)	wheel-thrown (?)	trimmed on lower body and base; repeated spatula marks all around the outer rim
125/51	Pl. 21 and 22	shaft-hole axe	copper alloy / bronze	-	-	-
125/52	Pl. 21 and 22	flat trapeze-like axe	copper alloy / bronze	-	-	-
125/53	Pl. 21 and 22	flat knife with a slightly bent profile	copper alloy / bronze	-	-	-
125/54	Pl. 21 and 22	lozenge-like bead	grey chalcedony with white bands	-	-	-
125/55	Pl. 21 and 22	two irregular spheroidal beads	lapis lazuli	-	-	-
125/56	Pl. 21 and 22	stone blade	grey chalcedony?	-	-	-
125/57	Pl. 21 and 22	shaft-hole axe	copper alloy / bronze	-	-	-
125/58	None	slightly restricted beaker, painted	buff/orange ware, very fine	5YR6/3 (dull orange) pigment 5YR7/1 (black)	wheel-thrown	turned on the base; the interior is more oxidised than the exterior
125/59	Pl. 15 and 16	slightly restricted beaker, painted	buff/orange ware, very fine	5YR7/6 (orange) pigment 7.5YR3/1 (brownish black)	wheel-thrown	trimmed on lower body and base; fired in a pile

Catalogue of grave 125 assemblage

The pottery of the grave, concerning the abundant number of bowls is made with fine ceramic pastes free from visible inclusions. The medium- and large sized bowls, at a preliminary visual inspection, seem to have been made with sequences of superimposed coils, fashioned and thinned at the potter's wheel, possibly, at least in some cases, formed with the aid of a flat spatula-like tool. Spatulas frequently left on the outer of the pots rhythmic series of fine, parallel marks. Given the fineness of the pastes, sometimes these marks may be confused with the chattering marks left by potters when they freehand trimmed the base and the lower walls of the vessels. The wide trimming of the base is a reasonably reliable indicator of the use of some kind of wheel.

Restricted beakers and small jars, and probably the smaller hemispherical and truncated cone-like bowls, were thrown directly on the potter's wheel in a single operation. The thicker and larger restricted jars were made with coarser pastes, formed with superimposed coils fashioned on the potter's wheel, then covered with a very fine slip or wash, and painted with dark pigments.

Most of the finer bowls are made in a fine grey ware, and fired in reducing conditions in piles that sometimes included specimens painted in different designs (e.g. fig. 13, 125/20). The control of the reducing atmosphere might have been partial (purposefully or not), because in the whole assemblage one sees a gradual transition from grey to light buff or even slightly reddish shadows.

Black-burnished ware pots are the coarsest ones, made with coils and heavily polished on the outer surfaces.

Comparisons and dating (see Pl. 23)

Ceramic comparisons with Shahr-i Sokhta, Tepe Yahya / Kerman and the Kech-Makran chronology allow us to date Spidej grave 125 around 3000 BC (between 3200 and 2800 BC).

Vessels 125/7, 8, 10 and 11 share the biconical profile, the firing in strongly reduced conditions and a careful polishing of the surface as pots found in the oldest graves and occupation layers of Shahr-i Sokhta and labelled "Black burnished ware". Many tombs, at Shahr-i Sokhta (Piperno & Salvatori 2007) have this type of vessel: Grave 116/6616 (p. 160),

128 inf./7102 and 7103 (p. 172), Grave 129/7110 (p. 173), Grave 135/7491 (p. 184), Grave 139/7530 (p. 189), Grave 708/7564 (p. 243), Grave 1102/8207 and 8208 (p. 349). In all these contexts, these jars are found with ceramics clearly ascribed to Period I (calibrated radiocarbon dated to 3100-2900 BC). In Grave 1002, a biconical black burnished jar is the sole furnishing (p. 341), and in another case (Grave 2/6398, p. 27) the same type appears together with ceramics datable to Period II, phase 5A, ca. 2600 BC⁴. These small biconical grey/black burnished jars were also found in Damin⁵ and Bampur 14 / Saidabad (see below).

The large lozenge-shaped bead of grey chalcedony, 125/54, is also common in the burials of Shahr-i Sokhta I. See, in Piperno & Salvatori 2007, Grave 710/7576 (p. 245); Grave 747/8509 (p. 315); Grave 748/8514 (p. 316); Grave 754/8555 (p. 325); Grave 750/8561 (where the bead type appears with a black-burnished biconical jar: p. 326-327).

In Kerman province, Tepe Yahya display few but significant similarities with a small subglobular jar, found in IVB.6 context but probably older ('intrusive black on buff ware'; Potts 2001: fig. 3.9, n° i and Mutin 2013: fig. 3.38, n° 1 / Yahya 0905, who includes this ceramic in his South-eastern Iranian Plateau / SEIP group) and which may be compared to our vessels 125/21, 22 and 40. Belonging also to these intrusive black on buff ware found in IVB.6 layers are two hemispherical bowl fragments (Potts 2001: fig. 3.7, n° f and g) displaying exactly the same decorative pattern under the rim as many bowls found in Spidej grave 125.

While the material found in grave 125 might present some general similarities with the 'local' / non Uruk-related painted assemblage found in Mahtoutabad III (Desset et al. 2013: 38-43), in a grave recently excavated by N. Eskandari in Varamin (6 km south-west of Konar Sandal South in Jiroft plain) and dated around the late 4th / early 3rd millennium BC (Eskandari, Hessari, Vidale & Desset, ongoing research), some bowls (vessels n° 31, 32 and 52) were identical to Spidej grave 125 hemispherical bowls with their outside painted decoration under the rim and their inside central decoration.

⁴ On the Black burnished ware found in Shahr-i Sokhta, see also Sajjadi 2003: fig. 24 and 29. On this type of ceramic in south-eastern Iran and its hypothetical relation with north-eastern Iran, see Mutin 2013: 114.

⁵ Tosi 1970: 22 and fig. 9a-d, 41 and 42: pots 16, 17, 18 and 19.

Some general features are also shared between Spidej grave 125 and Makran period IIIa, phase 2 ceramics, in the late 4th millennium BC, such as the fine black painted grey ware hemispherical bowls (Didier & Mutin 2013: fig. 4, n° 6 and 7; to be compared with our 125/49 notably).

In Khurab, Katukan and Damin, Stein excavated some graves showing some similarities⁶ with Spidej grave 125 assemblage, while the low beakers or goblets 125/1, 4, 9, 12, 23, 28, 32, 33, 38, 46 and 59 are almost identical, for form and decoration, to a type of small vessel found during illegal excavations in graveyards of central Baluchistan, dated to ca. 3100-2800/2700 BC⁷.

The best comparison for Spidej grave 125 is nevertheless to be found in the graveyard of Bampur 14 / Saidabad (Rahbar 1382/2003 and 1396/2017), located some 7,6 km west / south-west of Bampur archaeological compound and some 67 km south-east of Spidej (27° 9'45.71"N / 60°23'5.03"E). 15 graves were excavated here in 2003, some of them were just simple pits while some displayed circular or square/rectangular built mud bricks or chineh walls.

In several graves, more than 100 artefacts could be found far outnumbering the 59 artefacts found in Spidej grave 125. The funerary furniture included copper alloy artefacts such as knives (*khenjar*), vessels or mirrors, stone beads, marble vessels and one stone column. Ceramic vessels were mainly red and grey fine ware with black painted decoration. As in Spidej and on some vessels found in Makran, on some vessels could be observed the negative patterns impressed during the firing, due to the stacking of the ceramics (Rahbar 1396/2017: 64).

Rahbar (Rahbar 1396/2017: 65), while mentioning the ceramic comparisons between Bampur 14 and Shahr-i Sokhta II/III, stated that the best match was to be found with Spidej and that the Bampur 14 graveyard could be dated from 3000 BC to 2300 BC, which is more or less our estimation for Spidej graveyard A (see above).

⁶ Stein 1937: pl. XV, Dmn.01 (Damin), pl. XVII, n° A.117 (Khurab), pl. XXXII, n° 8 (Katukan) and 10 (Khurab).

⁷ See Franke & Cortesi 2015: Cat. 448. The same pattern is also recorded in a similar and contemporaneous small container, but with a sub-cylindrical body: *ibid.*: 204, Cat. 386.

Consequently, since Spidej grave 125 assemblage

- does not display the well-known tronconical footed beakers characteristics of the early/middle 4th millennium BC assemblages in South-Eastern Iran and Baluchistan;
- does not display the well-known ceramic shapes attested in the 2nd half of the 3rd millennium BC usually decorated with vegetal/animal painted patterns (which explains the lack of comparisons with Bampur and Shahdad⁸) such as the canister jars, pear shaped beakers, scorpion bowls, footed cups and globular pots with tubular spout;
- may be related to Shahr-i Sokhta I, Tepe Yahya IVC (and Varamin grave) and Kech-Makran IIIa (phase 2);

all in all, Spidej grave 125, may be confidently attributed to the late 4th / early 3rd millennium BC (3200-2800 BC), around 3000 BC. With the still partially and Persian published Bampur 14 / Saidabad graveyard, this grave and its assemblage are currently our best and most secure documentation for this period in Iranian Baluchistan.

Grave architecture, spatial setting of the objects and rituals of deposition (see Pl. 3 and 24)

The grave's chamber is subrectangular, with a north-west to south-east orientation. The north-western part is void of artefacts, while in the opposed part the objects are densely packed and often superimposed in piles. Due to the contingencies of the dig, the exact location of the vertical access shaft and the entrance to the chamber could not be located, but possibly the access was on the north-western side of the excavated cavity. In fact, it might seem more likely that restricted pots 18, 19, 48 and the largest container, necked jar 47, were deposited first in the rear of the grave chamber, particularly if they contained liquids.

The spatial setting of the 59 artefacts recorded in the grave seems to have followed certain depositional rules (Pl. 24) during the funerary ceremony. In catacomb graves of southern and south-eastern Iran, for example at Shahr-i Sokhta (Piperno & Salvatori 2007), bronze artefacts, cosmetic holders and other valuable items are often placed near the head of the dead who was usually deposited facing the entrance, thus it is possible that the body was placed in the gap visible between the main cluster, the cranium

⁸ See de Cardi 1970 and Hakemi 1997.

resting near the knife 55 and the beads 54 and 55. But this, like for the access, remains a conjecture.

If our hypothesis about the entrance of the chamber and the body location are correct (Pl. 24), then the introduction of the furniture in the grave probably started with a line in the southern part of the grave formed by two couples of larger restricted or painted pots (in red; from west, necked jars 47, the largest vessel of the grave, and 48; then necked jar 19 and pot 18). These vessels are accompanied by three hemispherical bowls (20, 49 and 50; in yellow) and by two more painted beakers, 58 and 59 (in blue).

The metallic and stone artefacts (in grey) were then probably placed near vessel 18, possibly before the deposition of the body.

After the body was introduced in the grave, a new depositional pattern started with several piles of grey-to-buff painted bowls (in green and yellow) placed one inside the other and associated to small bowls (in yellow) and painted beakers (in blue). Along the north-western wall of the chamber, a pile is formed by bowls 13, 5 and 4; a line of four black burnished jars (7, 8, 10 and 11, in dark grey) separates these pots from another group including respectively bowls 15 and 14 and 17 and 16, that might have belonged or not to a single pile. Both groups / piles (13, 5 and 4 vs. 15, 14, 17 and 16) are accompanied by a couple of the slightly restricted painted beakers (in blue) that are the most common ceramic type in the assemblage. The first group also includes a cone-like restricted jar with carinated shoulder (3, in red).

A second large pile is formed by bowls 27, 26 and 25. On top of these were placed the restricted beakers or small subglobular jars 21, 22, 23 plus a small hemispherical bowl, 24 (in yellow). The small bowls 29 and 30 (in yellow) and a larger restricted beaker, 28, were deposited west of this pile. The impression is that painted beakers (in blue) accompanied bowls (in green and yellow) after a complementary role in the rituals of deposition.

This impression is supported by the last pile, where after the first and large bowl 39 was offered, beaker 38 and then bowl 31 were deposited, followed by beakers 32 and 33 and bowl 35, on which were laid beakers and bowls 37 and 36. The position of these latter beakers might have been unstable, and perhaps we have to hypothesize that between these latter and bowl 31 there was some decayed organic material. The pile was finally

topped by bowl 34. Bowls and beakers, therefore, seem to have been deposited in couples, or in alternate sequences. At the western end of the chamber, the piled bowls 44, 42 and 43, accompanied by beakers 40 and 46 and by the small hemispherical bowls 41 and 45 seems to re-propose the same pattern.

On the whole, three copper alloy axes and a knife, plus the abundant pottery, witness a costly funeral, perhaps performed by a substantial congress. If the two couples of larger restricted or painted pots (18, 19, 47 and 48) and the metallic and stone artefacts probably deposited before the dead may have played a specific (ritual ?) role during the funerary procedure, perhaps as the private property of the dead or as a display of his/her wealth, the four piles of vessels subsequently placed were probably the remains of his/her relations with the living. They might have represented separate or parallel events, perhaps individuals organized in four groups (families ?) repeatedly placing in the grave the same coupled vessels (simplifying the matter, bowls plus beakers; food offerings / share of a funerary banquet ?), accompanied by peripheral small hemispherical bowls. In this second stage, the single and well delimited row of 4 biconical black-burnished jars (7/8/10/11) is probably far from casual and probably played a specific role. Future excavations should try to determine what their content might have been.

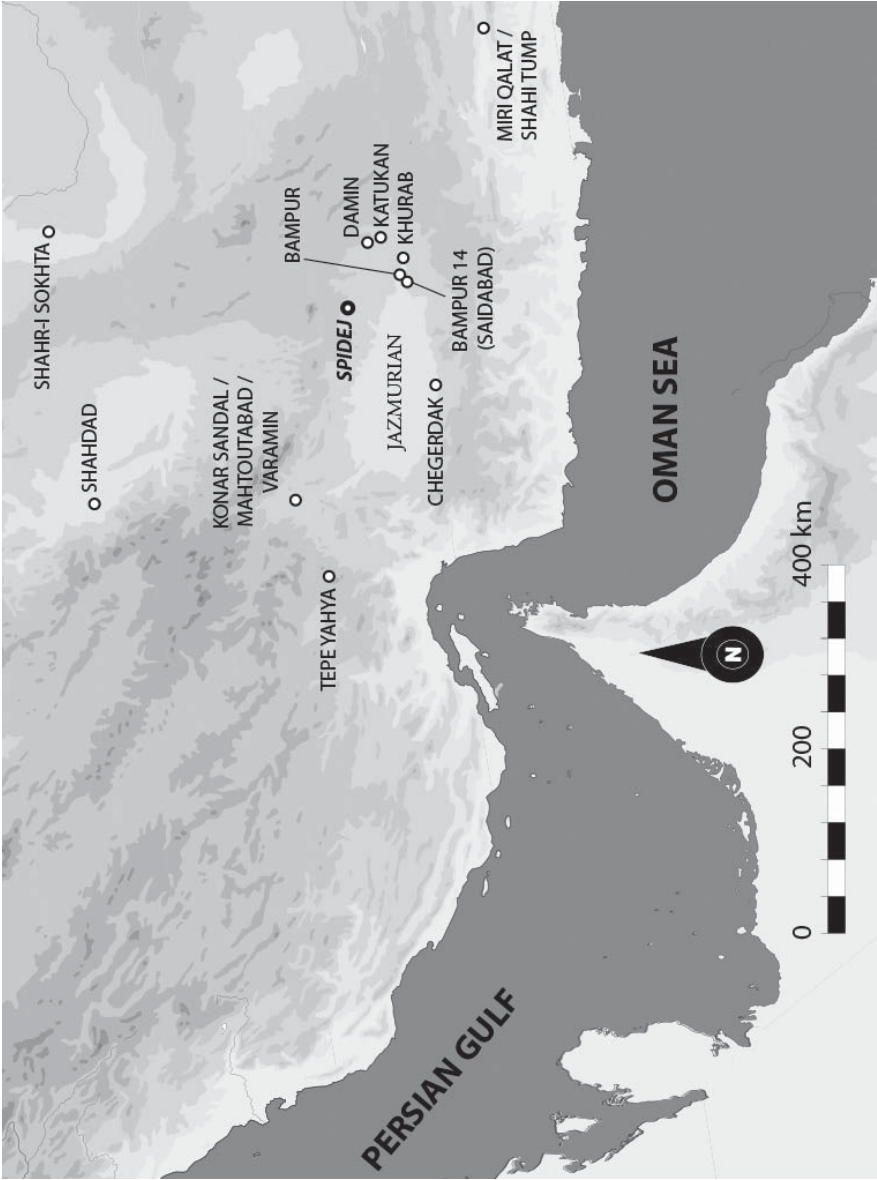
Conclusion

Grave 125 in Spidej graveyard A shed light on a poorly documented period in Iranian Baluchistan, around 3000 BC, with a coherent corpus of 59 artefacts variously related to Kerman, Sistan, Iranian Baluchistan and Pakistani Makran.

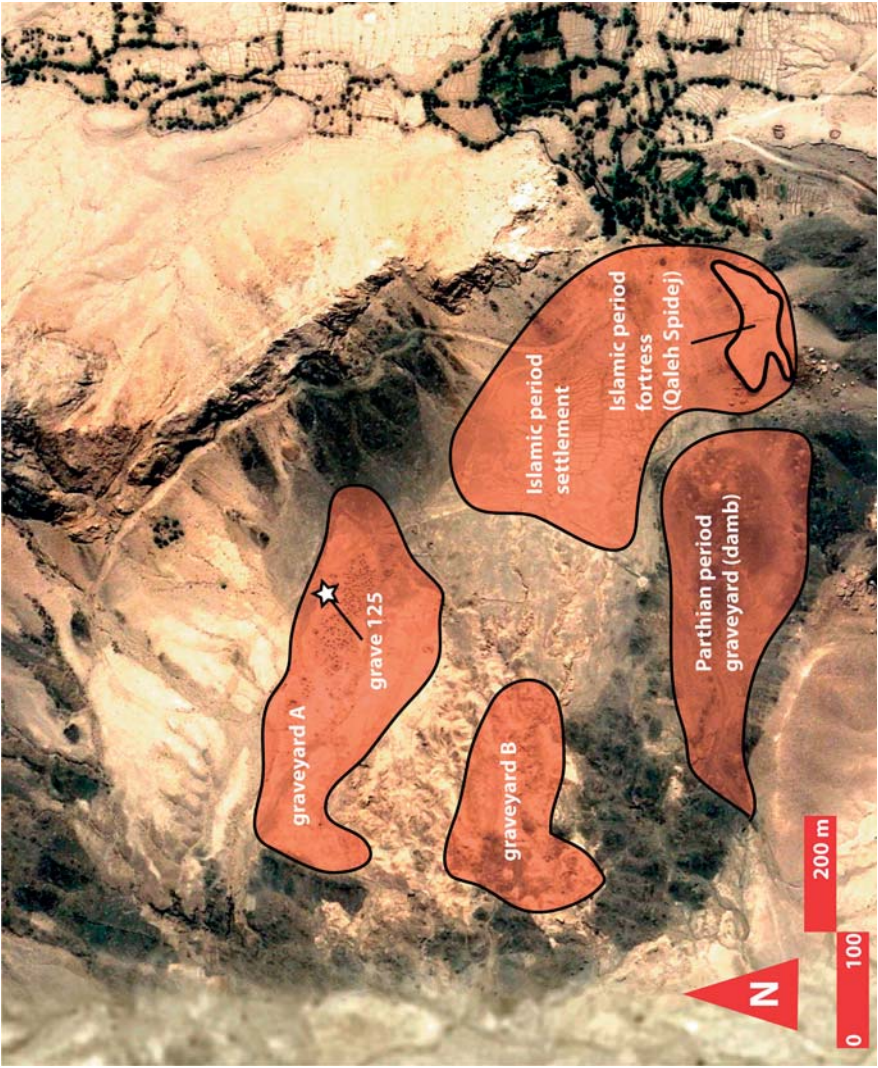
As the analysis of the depositional sequence of the furnishing may lead to hypotheses about its function, it should be stressed here that, facing the persistent lack of enough well controlled excavations and well stratified archaeological material, excavations and publications of graves (*ensembles clos*) well furnished with complete ceramic vessels, documented as far as possible by ¹⁴C dating, seem a rather efficient and low-cost strategy to progress in the basic ceramic typo-chronology of an area. This is a path we will follow in further publications.

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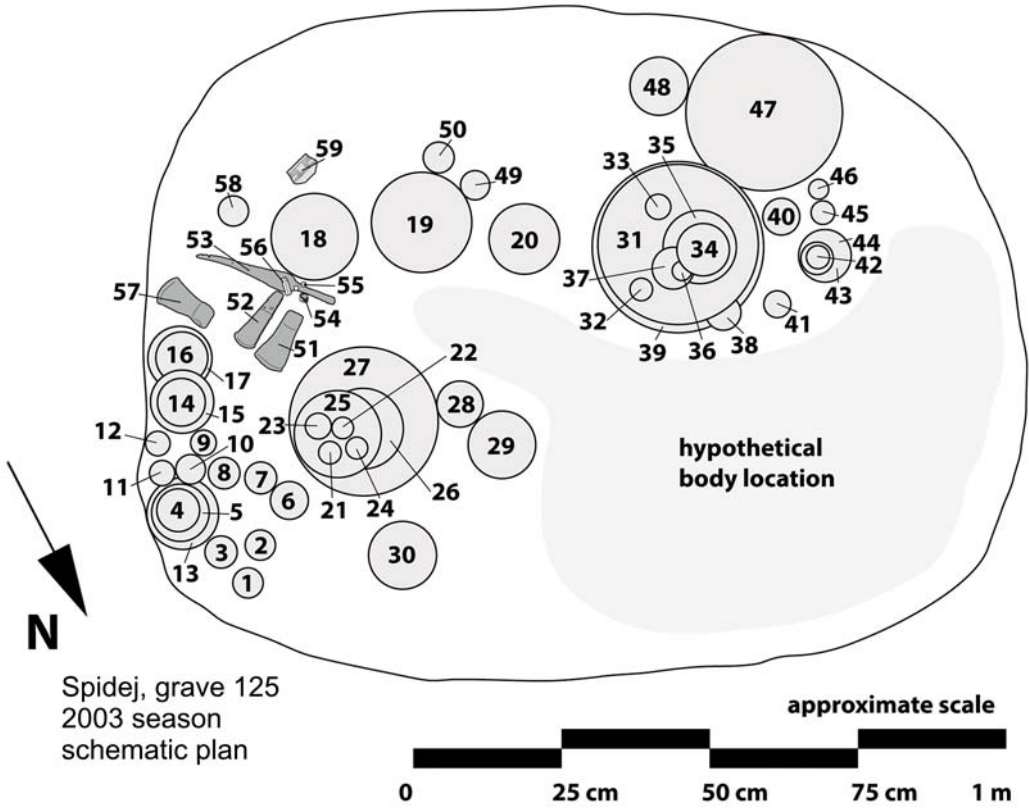
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Pl. 1. General map of the sites mentioned in the text.



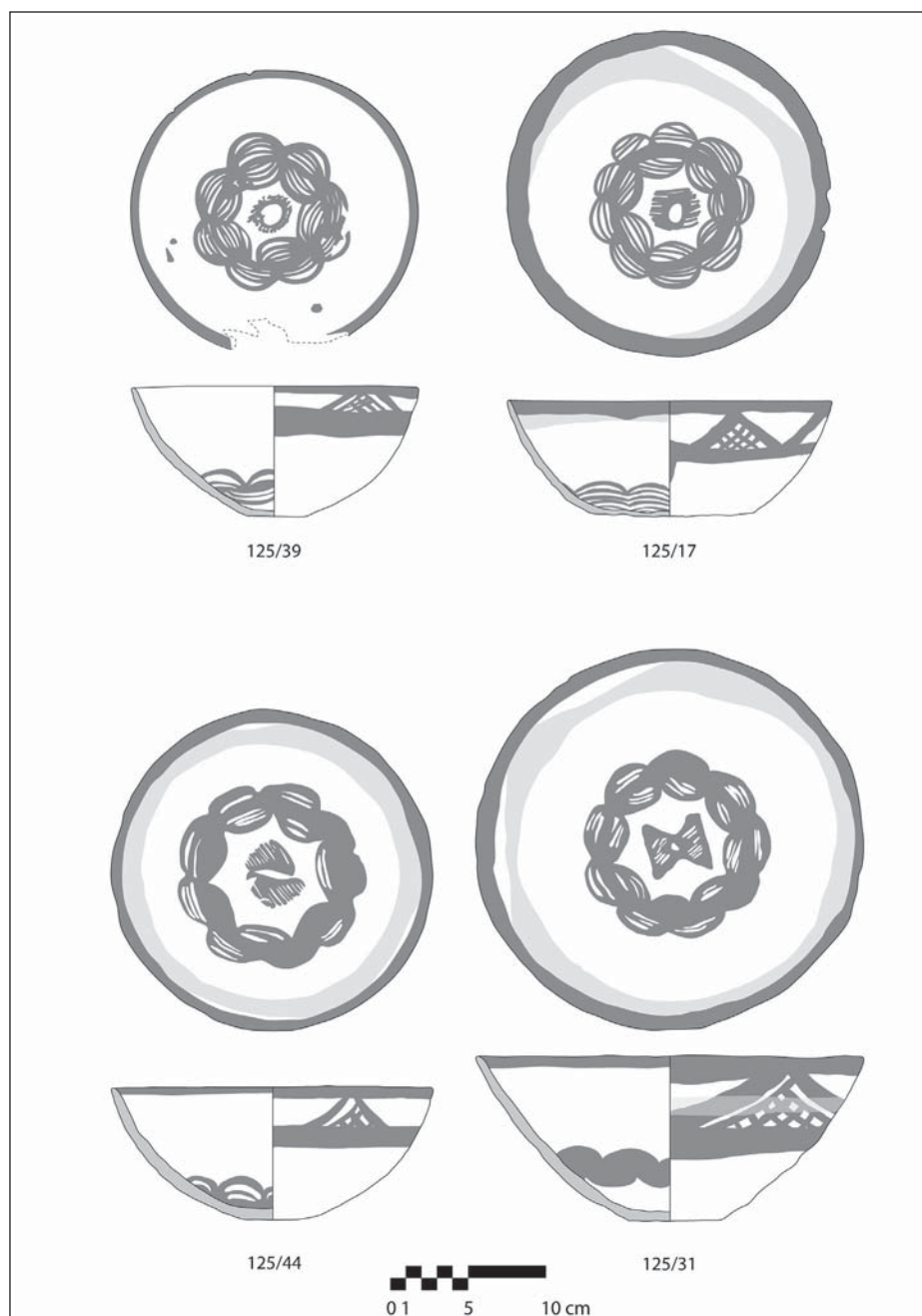
Pl. 2. Plan of the Spidej basin and its various occupations observed in the field.



Pl. 3. Schematic plan of grave 125.



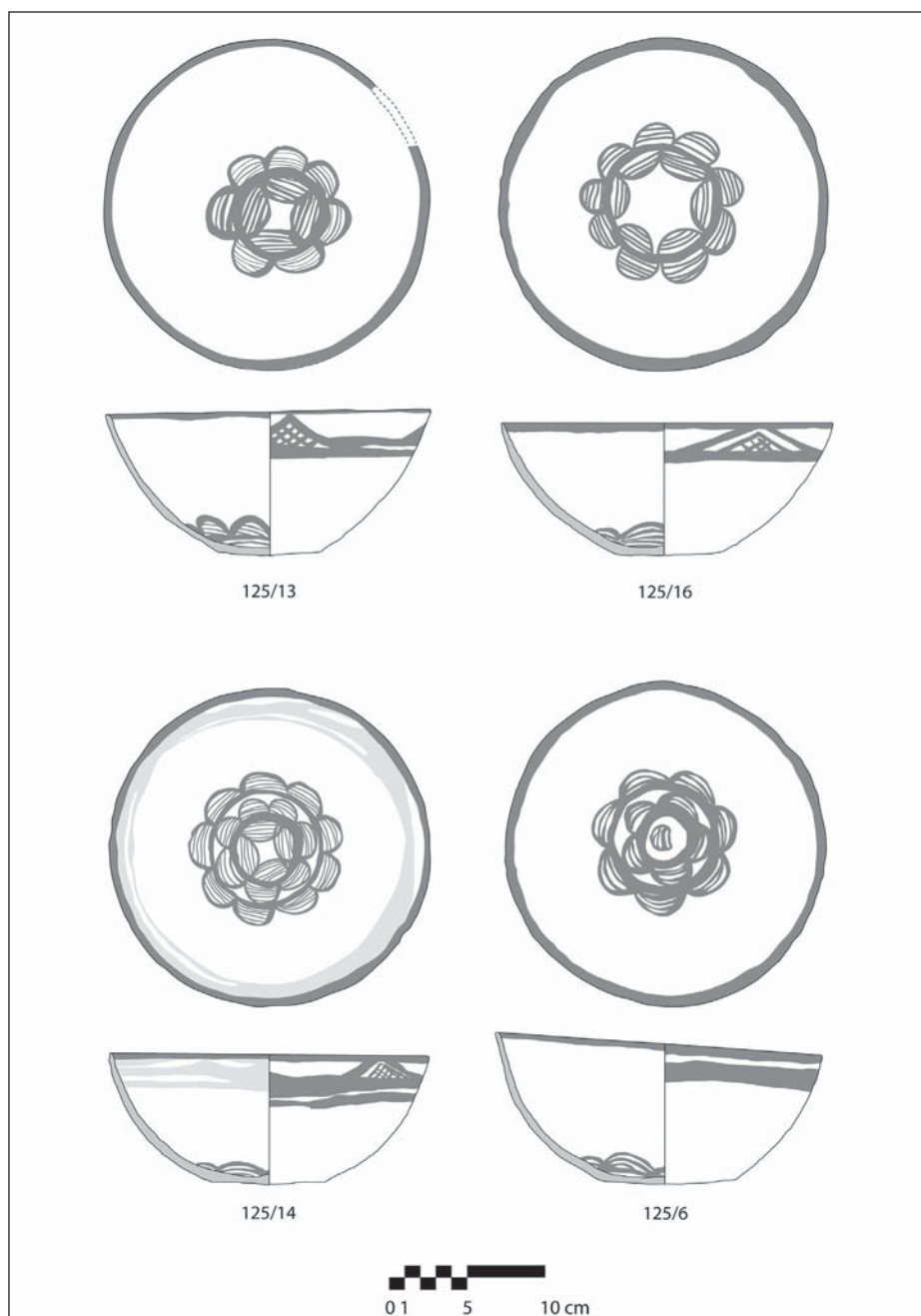
Pl. 4. Picture of the excavation of grave 125.



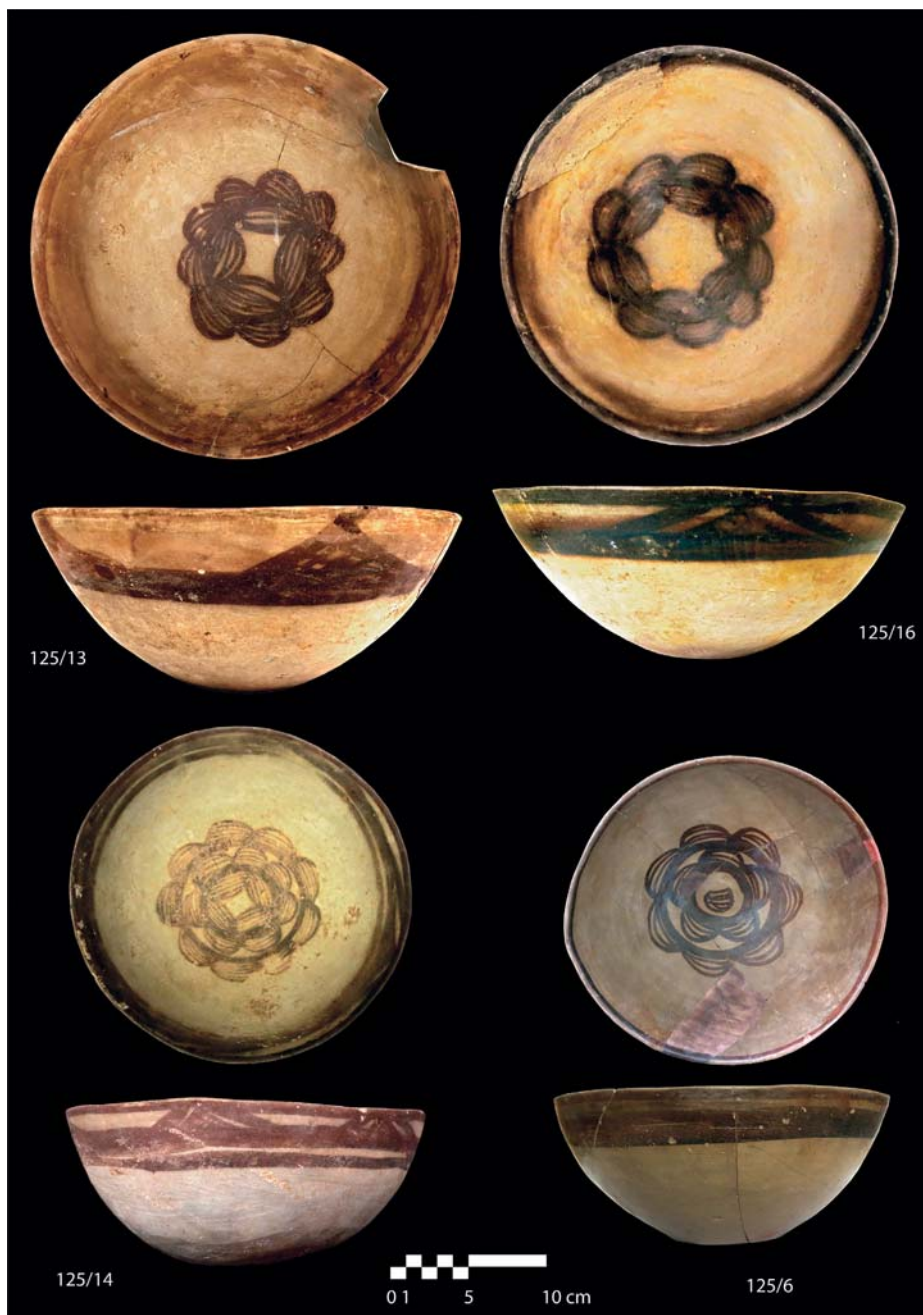
Pl. 5. Drawings of hemispherical bowls (part 1).



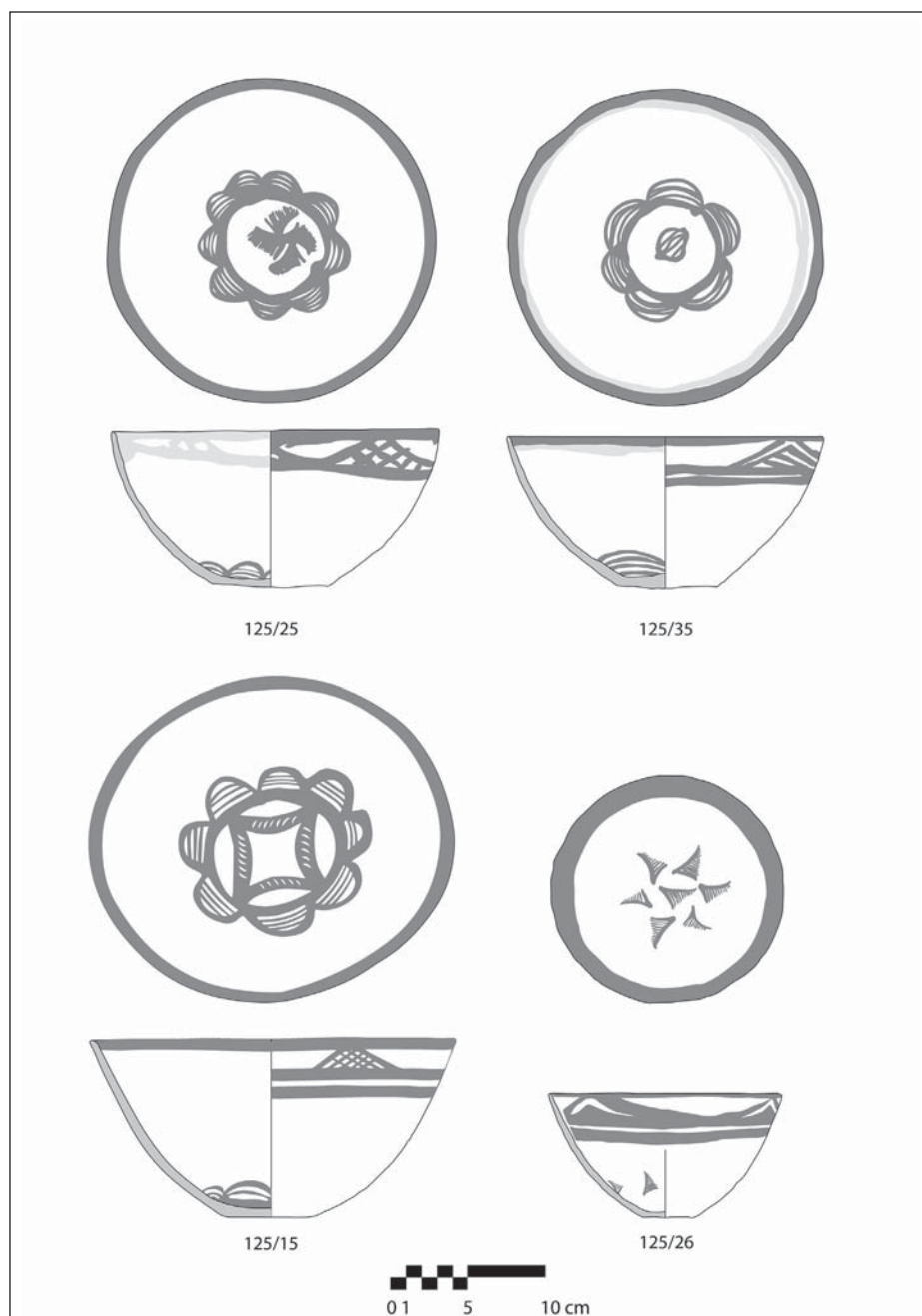
Pl. 6. Pictures of hemispherical bowls (part 1).



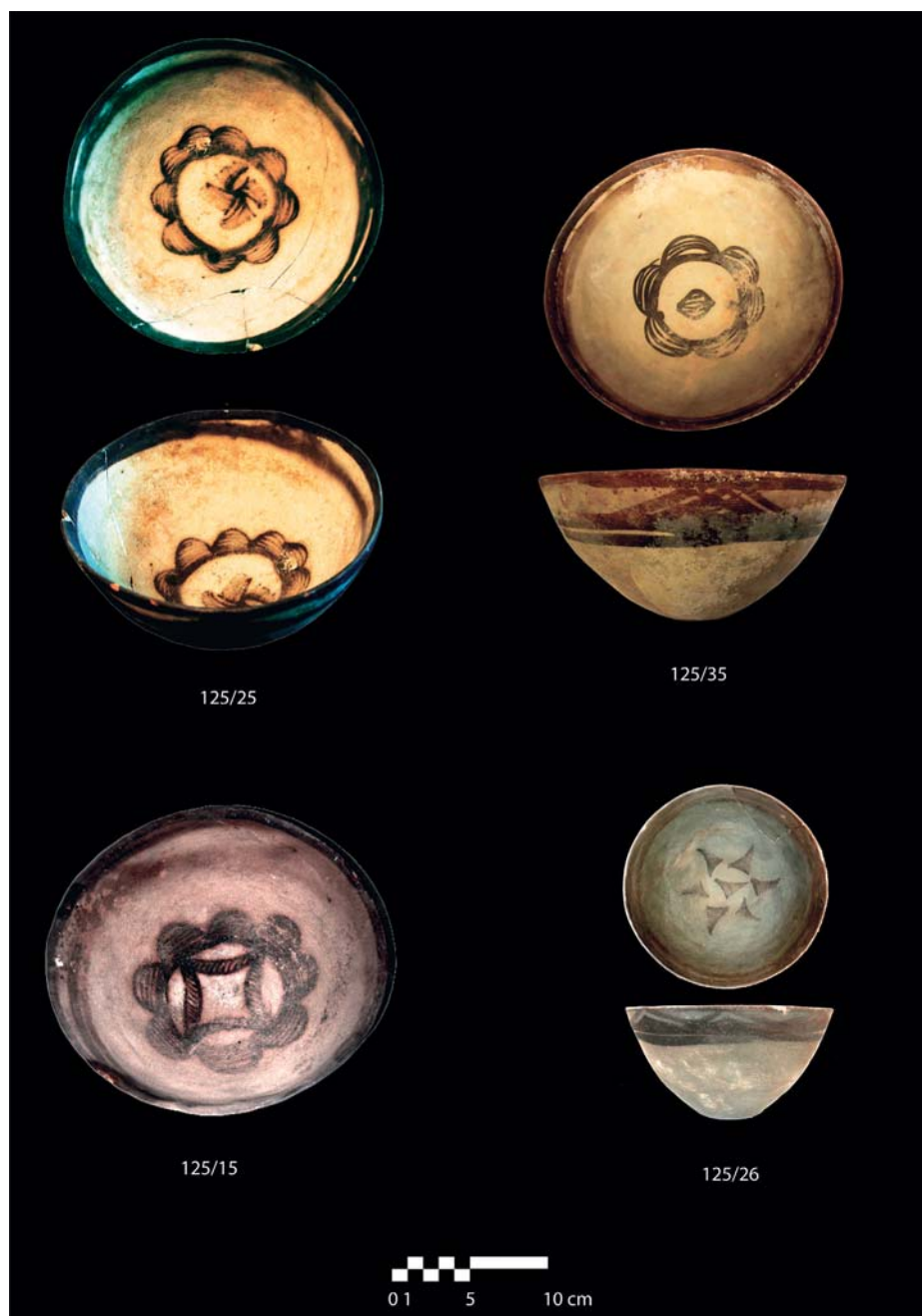
Pl. 7. Drawings of hemispherical bowls (part 2).



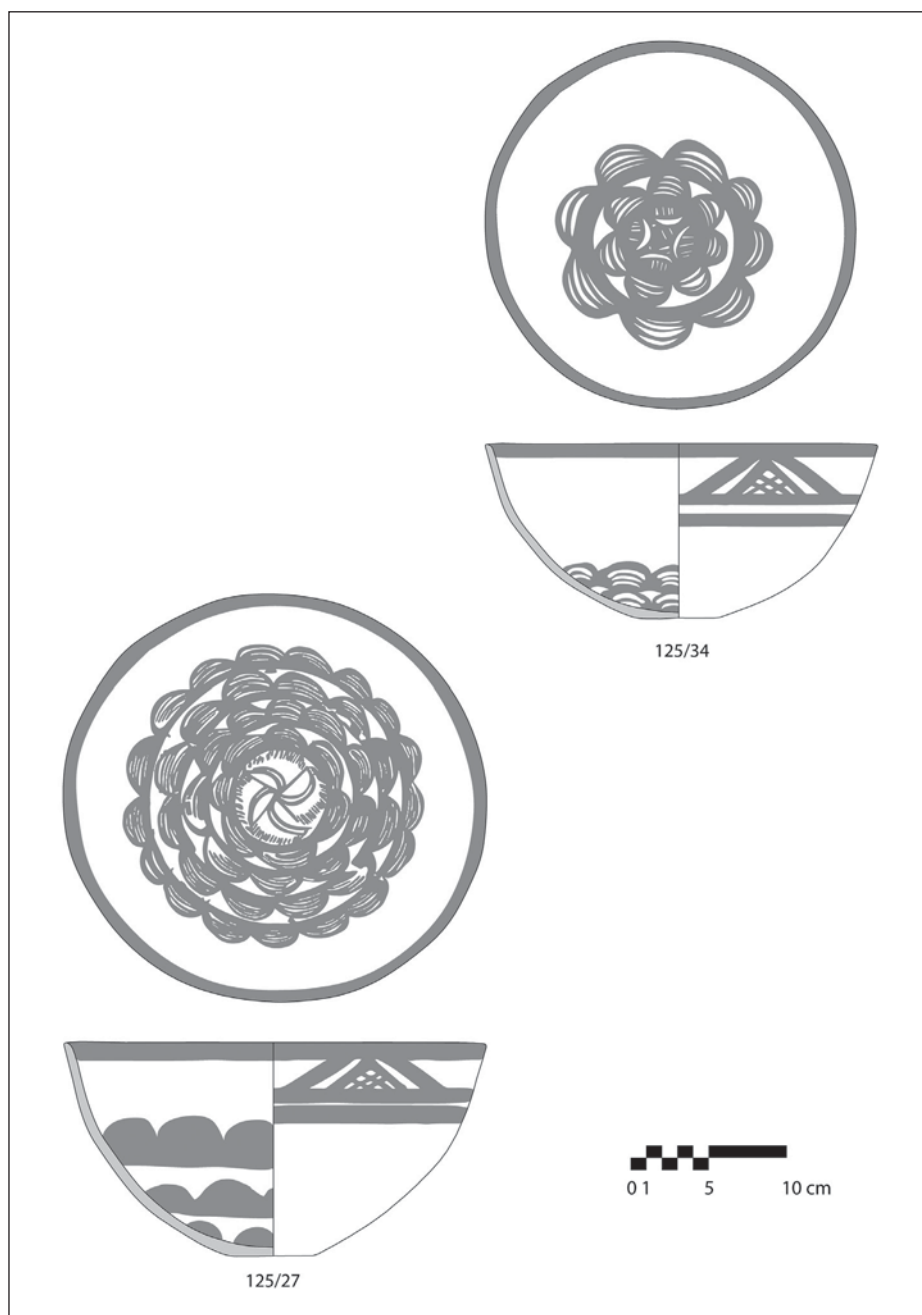
Pl. 8. Pictures of hemispherical bowls (part 2).



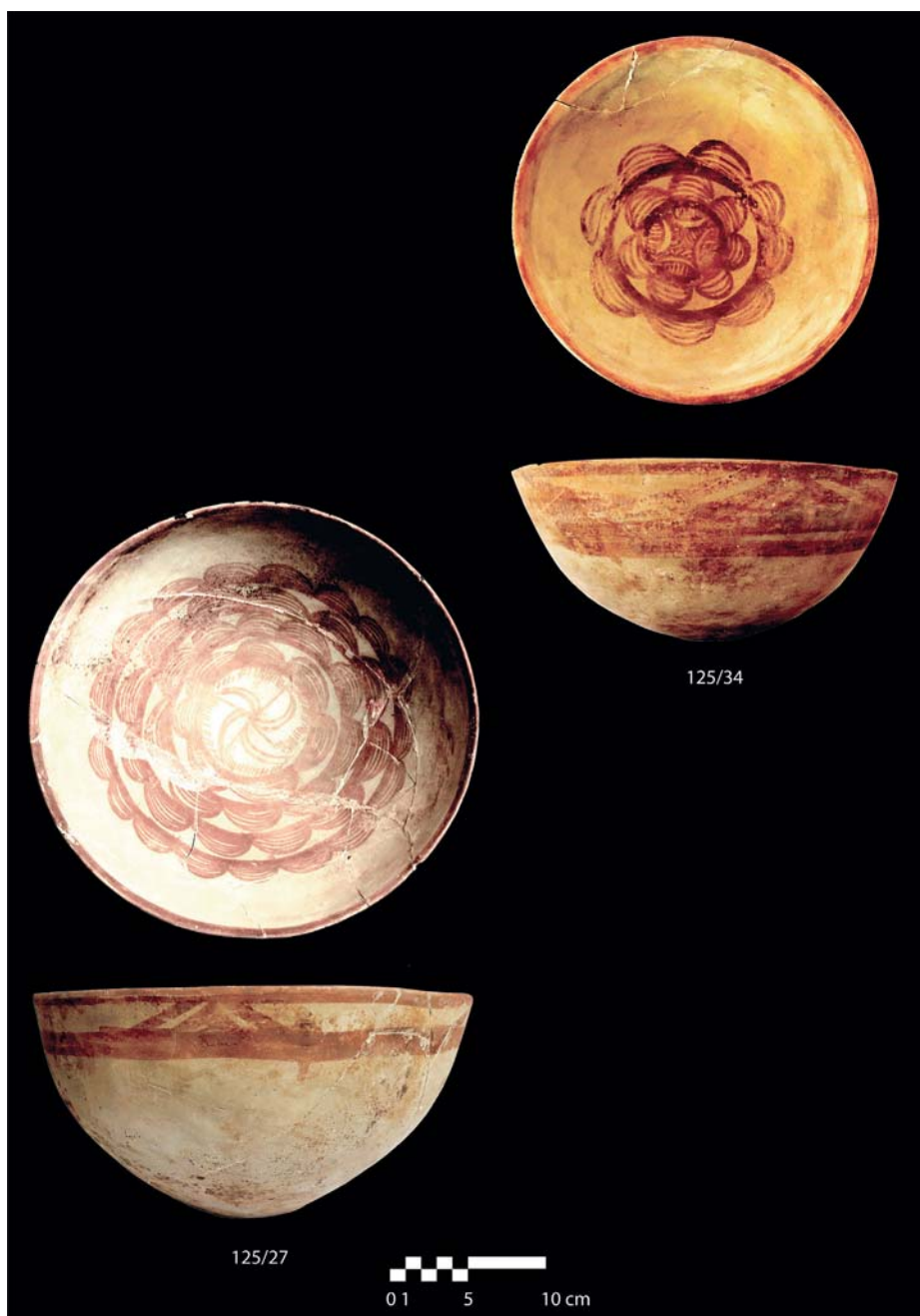
Pl. 9. Drawings of hemispherical bowls (part 3).



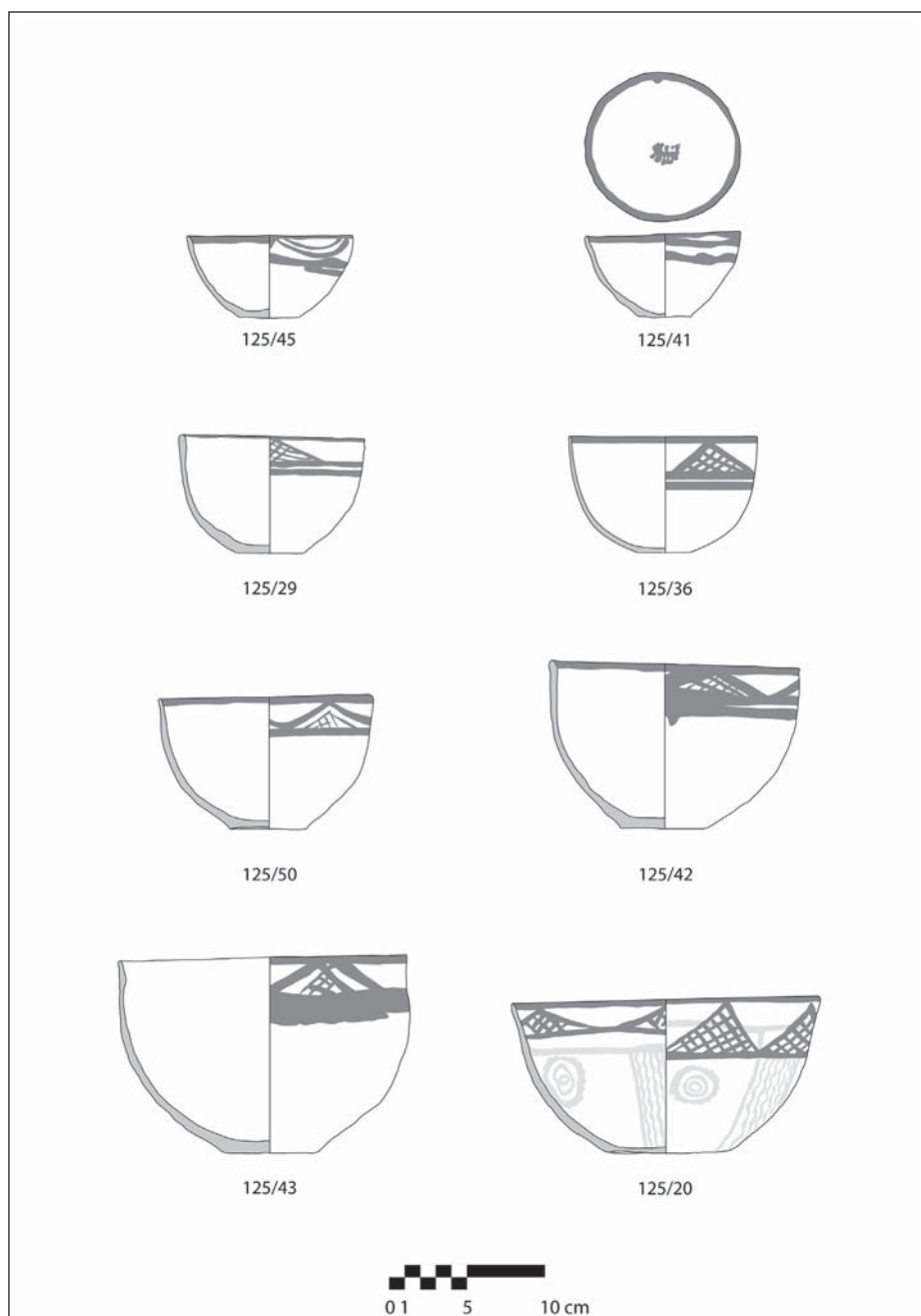
Pl. 10. Pictures of hemispherical bowls (part 3).



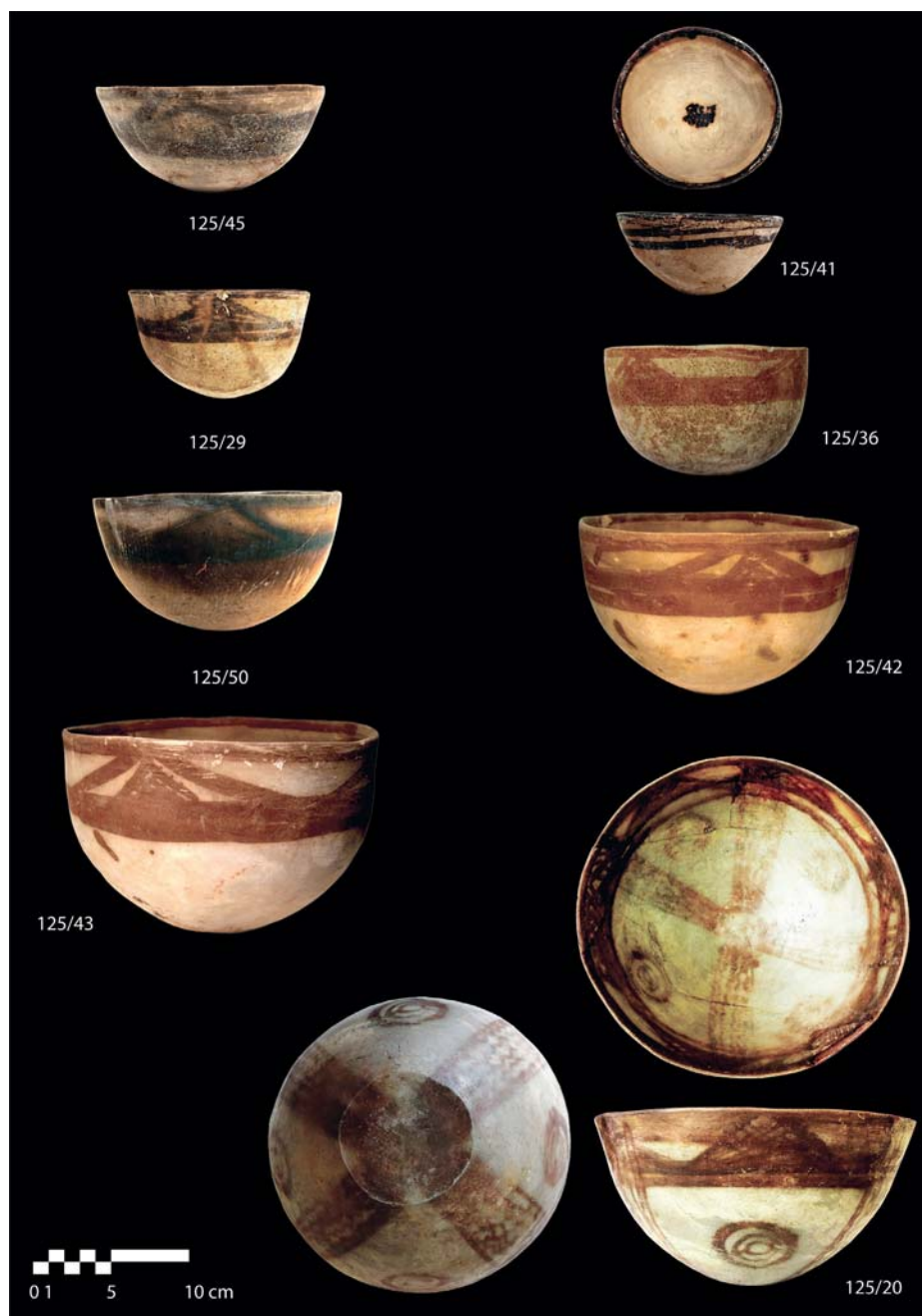
Pl. 11. Drawings of hemispherical bowls (part 4).



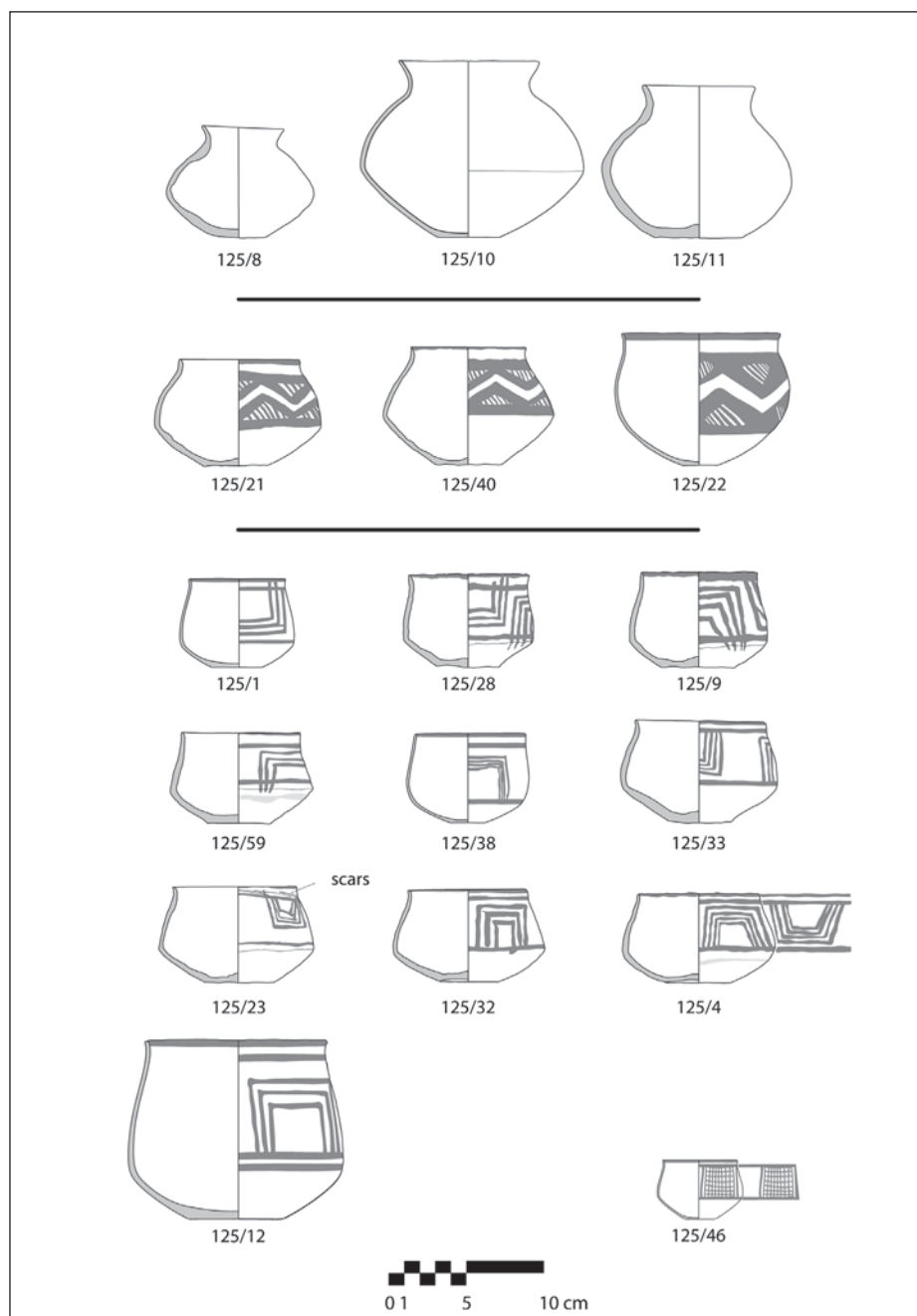
Pl. 12. Pictures of hemispherical bowls (part 4).



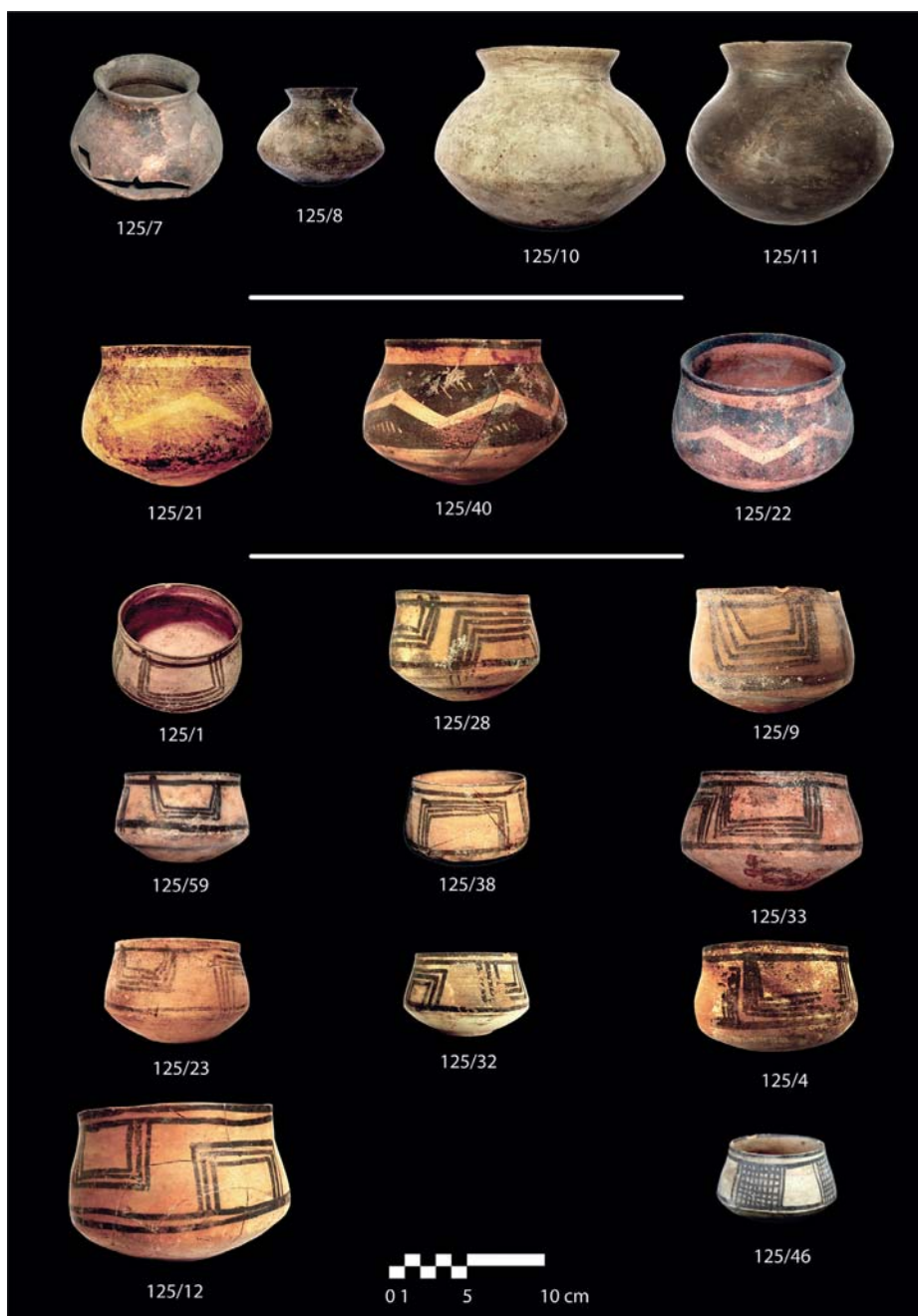
Pl. 13. Drawings of small and low hemispherical bowls.



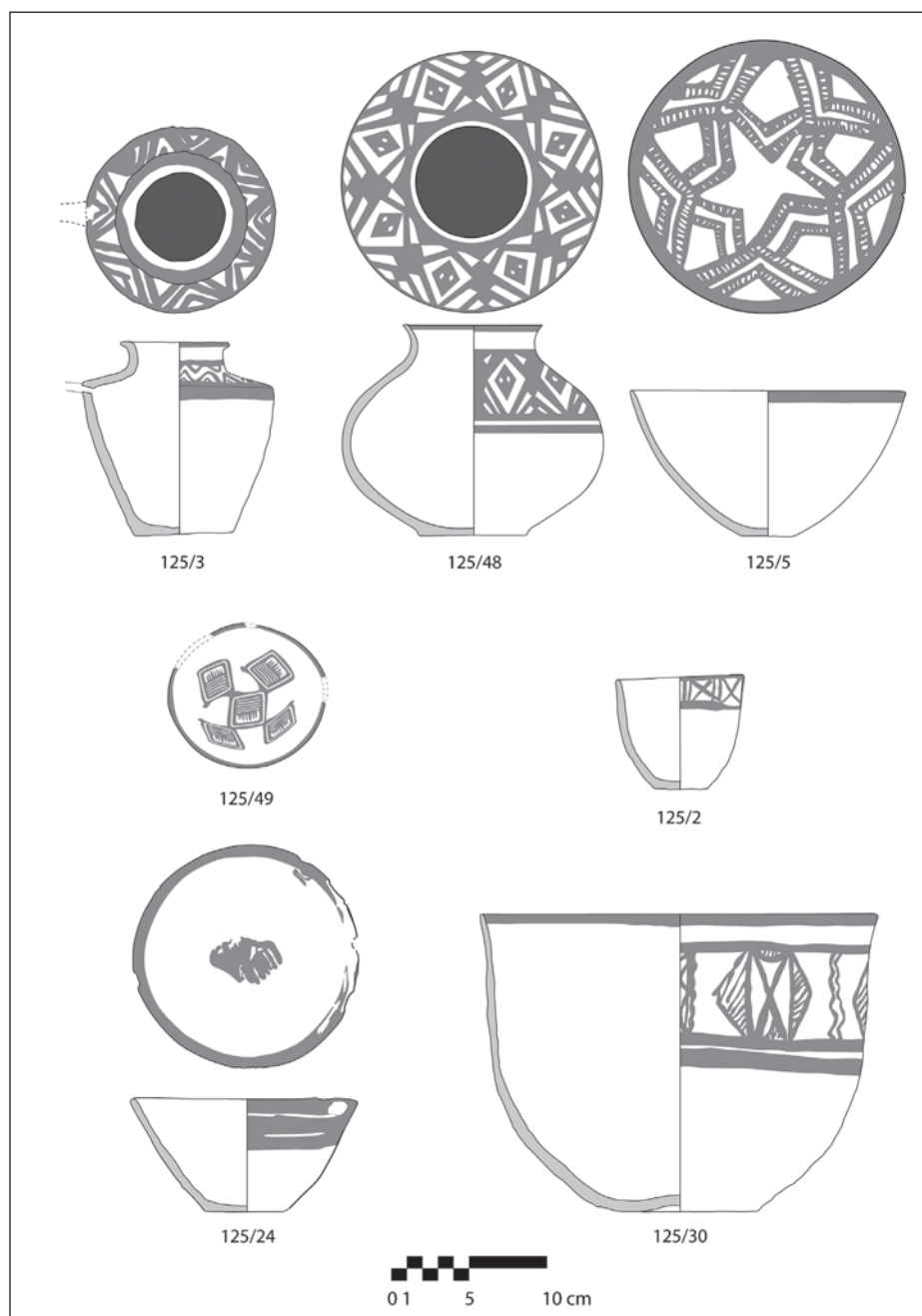
Pl. 14. Pictures of small and low hemispherical bowls.



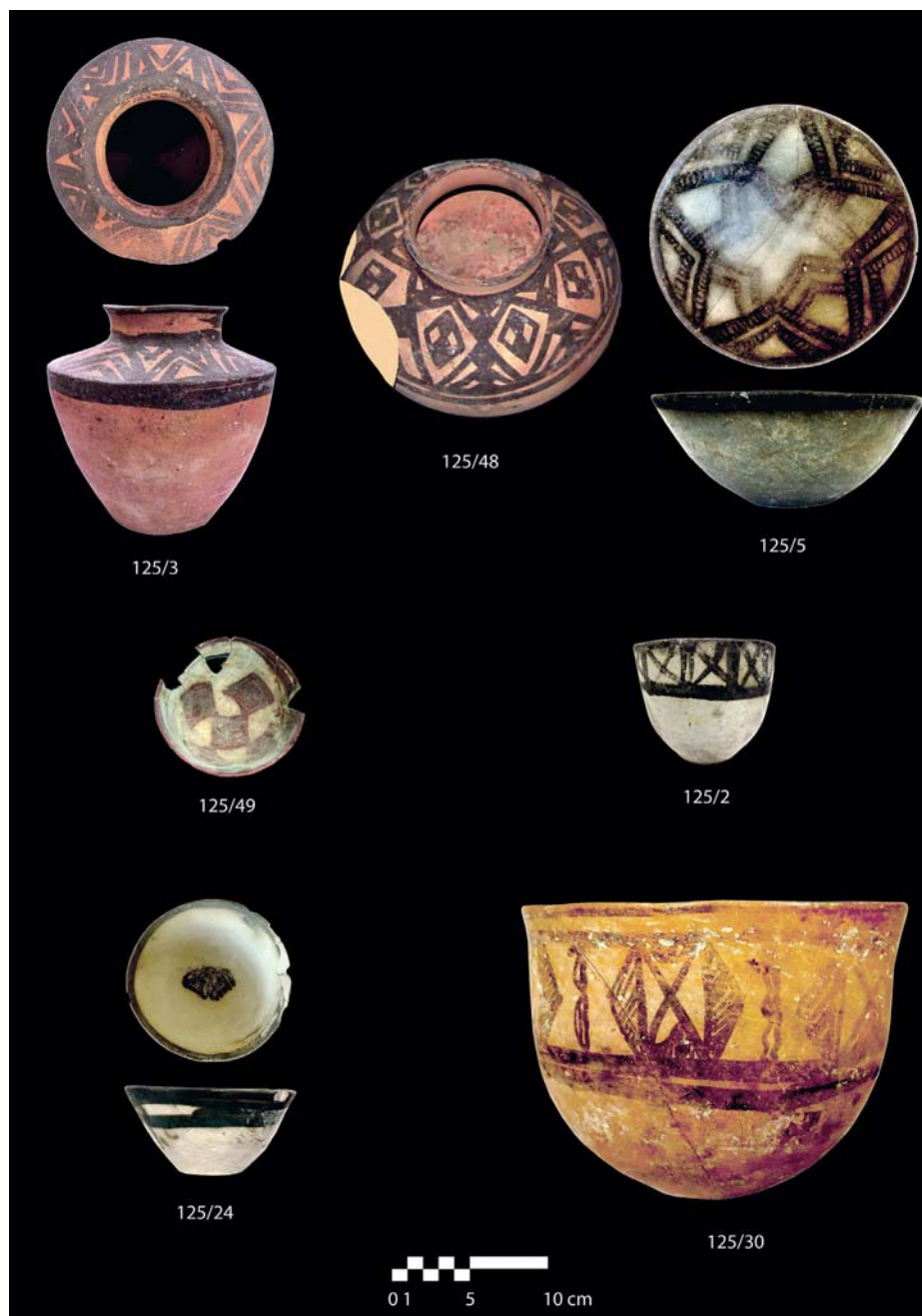
Pl. 15. Drawings of small biconical greyware jars, small subglobular jars with hatched painted decoration and slightly restricted beakers with rectilinear painted decoration.



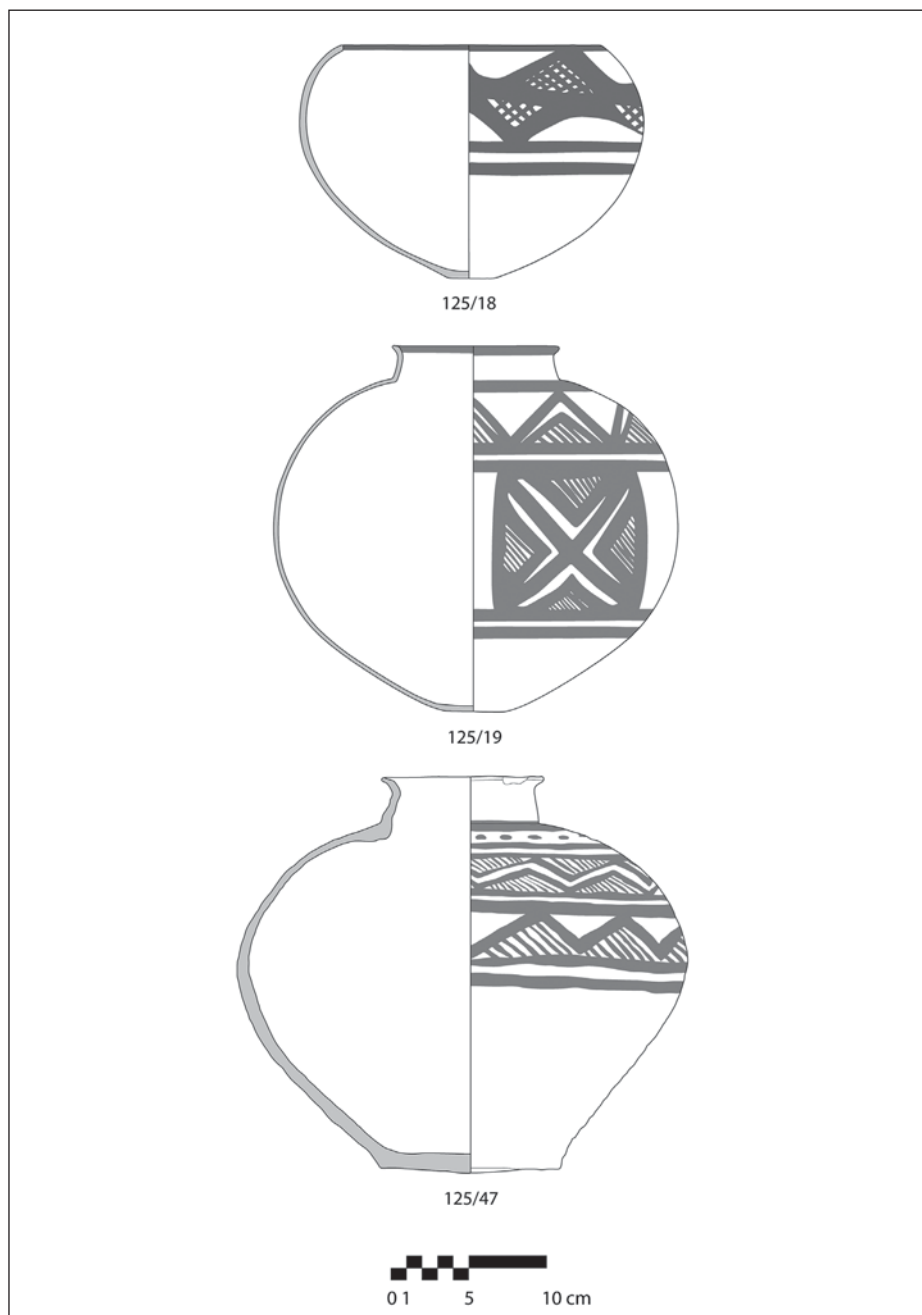
Pl. 16. Pictures of small biconical greyware jars, small subglobular jars with hatched painted decoration and slightly restricted beakers with rectilinear painted decoration.



Pl. 17. Drawings of various vessels (part 1).



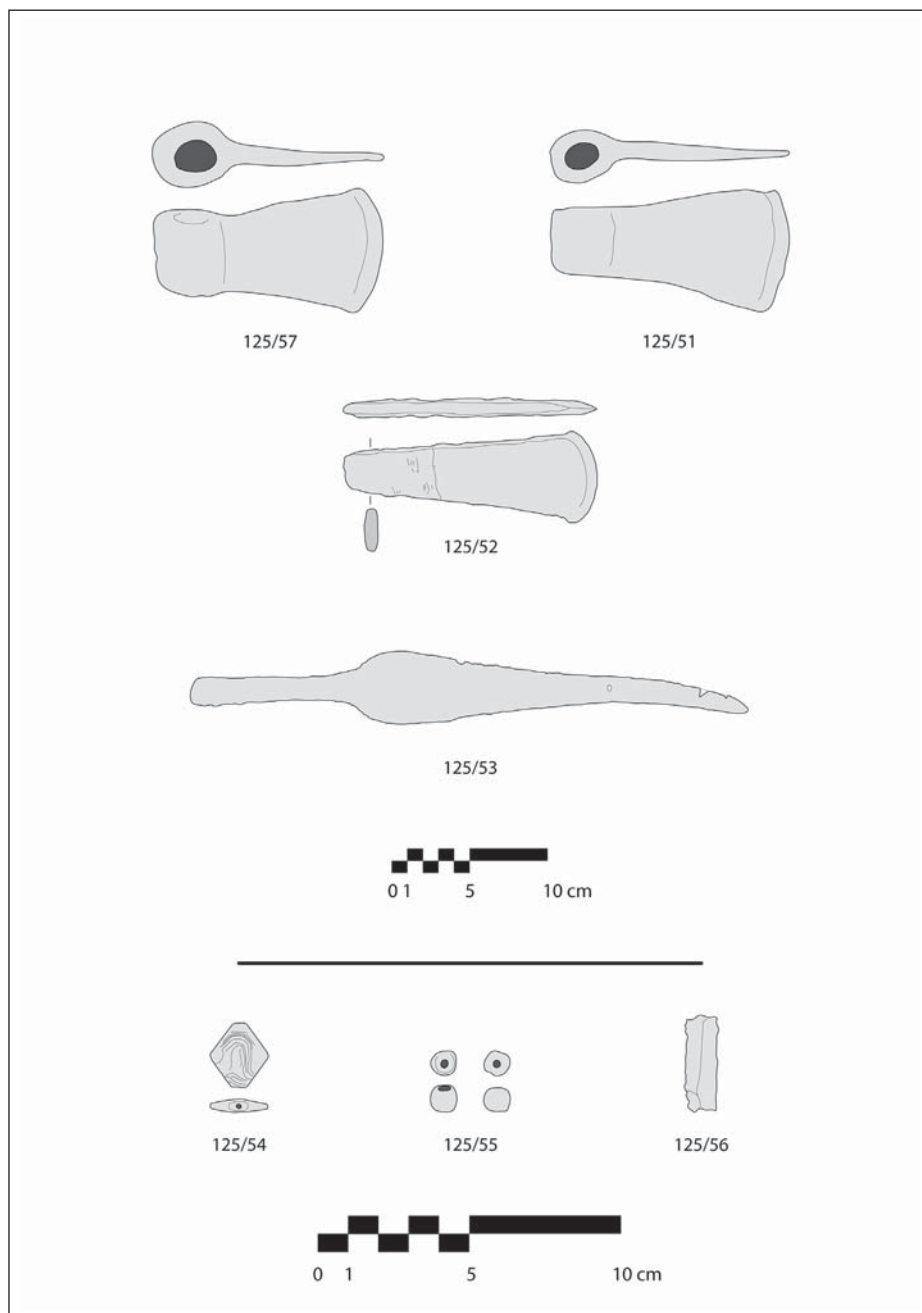
Pl. 18. Pictures of various vessels (part 1).



Pl. 19. Drawings of various vessels (part 2).
















Pl. 20. Pictures of various vessels (part 2).



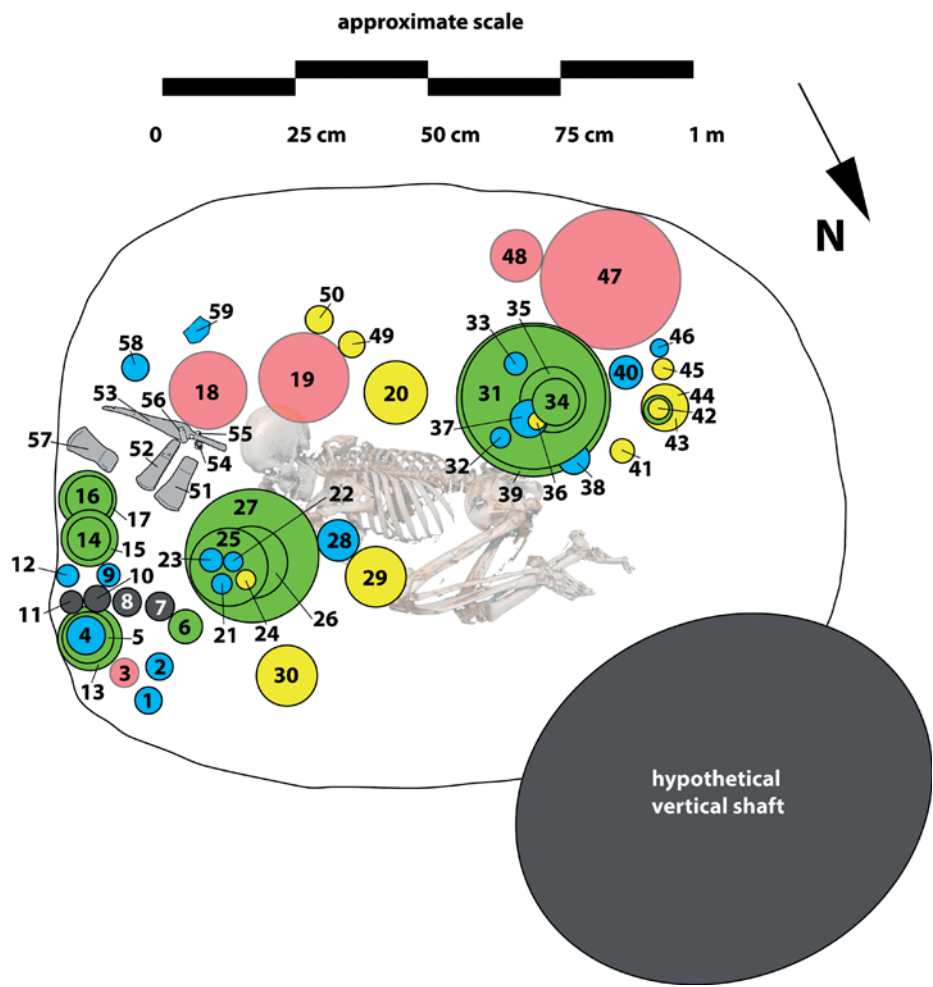
Pl. 21. Drawings of the metallic and stone artefacts.



Pl. 22. Pictures of the metallic and stone artefacts.

Spidej, grave 125	 130182	 130186	 130183	 130189	 130190	 130191	 130192
Bampur 14	 Bampur 141	 Bampur 142	 Bampur 143	 Bampur 144	 Bampur 145	 Bampur 146	 Bampur 147
Damin	 Damin 148	 Damin 149	 Damin 150	 Damin 151	 Damin 152	 Damin 153	 Damin 154
Khurab	 Khurab 155	 Khurab 156	 Khurab 157	 Khurab 158	 Khurab 159	 Khurab 160	 Khurab 161
Katukan	 Katukan 162	 Katukan 163	 Katukan 164	 Katukan 165	 Katukan 166	 Katukan 167	 Katukan 168
Tepe Yahya	 Tepe Yahya 169	 Tepe Yahya 170	 Tepe Yahya 171	 Tepe Yahya 172	 Tepe Yahya 173	 Tepe Yahya 174	 Tepe Yahya 175
Shahr-i-Sokhta	 Shahr-i-Sokhta 176	 Shahr-i-Sokhta 177	 Shahr-i-Sokhta 178	 Shahr-i-Sokhta 179	 Shahr-i-Sokhta 180	 Shahr-i-Sokhta 181	 Shahr-i-Sokhta 182
Baluchistan / Makran	 Baluchistan 183	 Baluchistan 184	 Baluchistan 185	 Baluchistan 186	 Baluchistan 187	 Baluchistan 188	 Baluchistan 189

Pl. 23. Ceramic typological comparisons between Spidej (grave 125), Bampur 14, Damin, Khurab, Katukan, Tepe Yahya, Shahr-i Sokhta and Central Baluchistan / Makran (?); the vessels are not on the same scale.



Pl. 24. Spatial analysis of the location of the funerary furnishing in grave 125.

THE HARBOUR(S) OF NAGITU: MESOPOTAMIAN MOORING PLACES, ELAMITE GARRISONS AND ARAMEAN SETTLEMENTS

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Abstract: This article investigates the toponym(s) Nagitu. In the Neo-Assyrian sources, the Elamite coastal town is often attested with various postpositions: Nagitu-raqqi, Nagitu-di'bina or Nagitu-of-Elam (*ša* KUR.ELAM.MA.KI). After an examination of the etymology of the various Nagitu attestations, geographical indications are sought to help determine the locations of the different Nagitu toponyms. These indications are then compared with the landscape descriptions of the Classical authors and the early Arab geographers in order to draw a picture of the historical geography of the Nagitu triad.

Keywords: Nagitu, Elamite harbours, northern Persian coastline, historical geography

Introduction

The ancient maritime network of the Persian Gulf speaks to the imagination. Each of the numerous elements enabling this network – the maritime itineraries, the harbours and mooring places, the types of seafaring ships, the variety of transported goods, the commercial and political interests of the kingdoms along the Gulf coast – warrants a historical study. But some are more amenable to scholarly research than others, depending on the available source material (cuneiform texts, archaeological remains, iconography and paleogeography).

One poorly investigated aspect of the Persian Gulf history is the historical geography of the Elamite coastal region. In particular, the Neo-Elamite participation in the Gulf network during the first half of the 1st millennium

¹ I would like to express my gratitude to Jean-Charles Ducène and Johannes den Heijer for navigating me through the literature on the Arab geographers.

BC has received little attention by the scholarly community. Currently our knowledge on Neo-Elamite involvement in the Gulf network does not reach further than the hypothesis that Elam's 2nd millennium BC international port, Liyan (modern Bushehr), was still active in the early 1st millennium BC. This southern Elamite harbour was probably a transshipment port for goods such as cotton (Álvarez-Mon 2015) coming from Eastern Arabia.

Despite the c. 200 km long coastline of Elam², scholars have not directed their efforts towards finding evidence for more northern Elamite harbours connecting the Elamite lowlands of Susiana with the Gulf network (Salaris & Basello 2019: 81 n. 5). The numerous attestations of Southern Mesopotamian and Elamite mooring places in the description of naval campaigns in the Neo-Assyrian Royal Annals provide sufficient evidence for the hypothesis that ships had navigated a maritime route between Sealand in Southern Mesopotamia and the Elamite Susiana region during the first half of the 1st millennium BC. However, identifying the precise location of these place names within the historical landscape of the southern Elamite-Mesopotamian border region remains a challenge. The coastline at the head of the Persian Gulf was gradually modified by geomorphological processes throughout the centuries (Heyvaert, Verkinderen & Walstra 2013; Cole & Gasche 2007), and these geological changes impacted both the position of the river outlets (Karun, Karkheh, Tigris, Euphrates) into the Gulf and the position of the harbours. From the 3rd millennium BC onwards, the ports of the Sealand and the Susiana region were often subject to relocation and the names of the harbour towns also changed over time. The earliest references to Susian ports can be found in Sumerian and Akkadian cuneiform texts, in Elamite and Aramaic toponyms and later on in the books of the early Arab and Persian geographers.

This article focuses on the mooring places along the north shore of the Elamite coast that were used by Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian officials when crossing the head of the Persian Gulf on their maritime journeys from Sealand to the Susiana region. More particularly, it will examine a group of three toponyms, i.e. the Nagitu triad of Nagitu-raqqi, Nagitu-di'bina and Nagitu-of-Elam, to ascertain their role in the larger Gulf network.

² For further information and references on the inland extent of the Persian Gulf and consequently the length of the Iranian coastline, see Blaschke 2018: 69.

Attestations of the Nagitu triad

Nagitu, Nagitu-raqqi and/or Nagitu-di'bina are attested in documents from the reigns of the Neo-Assyrian kings Tukulti-Ninurta II, Sargon II, Sennacherib, Assurbanipal and the Neo-Babylonian king Nabopolassar. However, the Nagitu triad are not listed as separate toponym entries in reference works for the Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian period (Dietrich 1970; Zadok 1985; Frame 1998: 80) and Cole & Gasche (2007: 29) also assumed that Nagitu-raqqi and Nagitu-di'bina were onomastic variations on Nagitu. In the tables below, all attestations of the Nagitu triad are summarised in their context:

Table 1. Text references of Nagitu and Nagitu-di'bina³

	Reference	Description
1.1	RIMA 2 A.O.100.5 84	N. occurs in an account of a campaign of Tukulti-Ninurta II in Laqaean territory (Lower Ḥabur region). After Ḥindanu, situated on the west bank of the Euphrates, the Assyrians crossed a rocky region at a distance of the river to reach N. , an area that did not belong to the Laqaens.
1.2	Fuchs 1994, Ann. 279K	According to Sargon II, the land N. (<i>kur-na-gi-a-te</i>) was one of the districts of the Gambulu province ⁴ . Between the land of Nagiāte and the Tubliaš River were 7 fortified settlements.
1.3	RINAP 3 1, 42 = 213, 42	The city N. is listed among 39 fortified cities of Bit-Amukani.
1.4	RINAP 3 20, i'1 = 46, 56	Sennacherib ordered to march against the followers of Merodach-Baladan II in the land N.
1.5	RINAP 3 22, iv 37 = 23, iv 31-32	During Sennacherib's 6 th campaign, Sennacherib crossed with boats to conquer the cities of N. , N. di'bina , as far as the lands of Ḥilmu, Pillatu and Ḥupapanu, all districts of the land of Elam.

³ RINAP 3 22, iv 38 = 23, iv 32; RINAP 3 34, 20 = 143, i 6'; RINAP 3 44, 29; RINAP 3 46, 42; RINAP 3 46, 83; RINAP 3 46, 95; RINAP 3 230, 17.

⁴ Zadok (2013: 296-297; also Fuchs 1994: 433) reconstructed, based on the Sargon II Annals, 9 districts of the Gambulu province: Ḥubaqānu, Tarbugātu, Timassunu, Pašur, Ḥirutu, Ḥilmu, [x], region between Nagiate and Tubliaš, and [x]. Two districts in the vicinity of Ḥilmu and Nagiate are missing in the reconstruction. Comparing these districts with the Annals of Sennacherib, the two gaps can probably be restored with the districts of Pillatu and Ḥupapanu.

	Reference	Description
1.6	RINAP 3 26, i 1'	Sennacherib conquered and destroyed N ⁵ .
1.7	RINAP 3 34, 6b	Merodach-Baladan II fled alone from Sennacherib to Sealand, where he collected his ancestors and people. He loaded them onto boats and crossed over to the city N. on the other side of the Sea (<i>ša e-ber-tan ÍD.mar-rat e-bir-ma</i>).
1.8	RINAP 3 34, 20 = 143, i 6' ⁶	The people of the land of Bit-Yakin had crossed the sea and taken residence in the cities N. (and) N.- di'bina , the lands ̕ilmu, Pillatu, (and) ̕upapanu, districts of the king of the land Elam (<i>na-ge-e</i> LUGAL KUR. ELAM.MA.KI) that are situated on the other side of the Sea. Sennacherib crossed the Sea, conquered and burned down the cities in these districts.
1.9	RINAP 3 44, 25b ⁷	The inhabitants of Chaldea crossed the Sea and set up their residences in the city N. (URU. <i>na-gi-a-ti</i>). Sennacherib crossed the Sea after them and conquered the cities of N., N. di'bina , ̕ilmu, Pillatu and ̕upapanu, districts on the other side of the Sea (<i>na-ge-e ša e-ber-tan ÍD.mar-ra-ti</i>).
1.10	RINAP 3 46, 48	On Sennacherib's 6 th campaign, he marched against the cities N. (and) N.- di'bina , cities of the king of the land Elam whose dwellings are situated on the other side of the Bitter Sea, (and) the people of Bit-Yakin, crossed the Sea.
1.11	RINAP 3 46, 76b-80	Sennacherib's boats reached the marshy area at the mouth of the Euphrates where it entered the Gulf. Sennacherib's fleet took a position on the Babylonian shore of the Gulf opposite them (the refugees of Bit-Yakin) and ordered his fleet to cross over to the land of the city of N. (KUR URU. <i>na-gi-i-ti</i>).
1.12	RINAP 3 46, 81b-90	At the shore of the Gulf (<i>tam-tim gal-la-ti</i>), which was unsuitable and very difficult (for ships) to dock and for men to set foot on, the people of Chaldea were living in the cities N. (and) N.- di'bina . The people of the lands ̕ilmu, Pillatu and ̕upapanu saw the Assyrian boats, prepared for battle and drew up the battle line at the banks of the Ulaya River. This river had good banks that enabled the Assyrian army to disembark.

⁵ This fragment contains lacunas. The geographical name Nagitu is restored based on the readability of the last two signs. Consequently the RINAP authors restored Nagitu with the preceding determinative [URU.*na*]-*gi-ti*. However, since there is no exact copy of the phraseology, the determinative could be KUR as well.

⁶ RINAP 3 34, 20 = 143, i 6' is a more extended version of RINAP 3 22, iv 37 = 23, iv 31-32.

⁷ RINAP 3 44, 25b is the shorter version of RINAP 3 22, iv 32 = 23, iv 30.

	Reference	Description
1.13	RINAP 3 46, 91	The Assyrian fleet reached the quay of the harbour (<i>a-na ka-a-ri ma-kal-le-e</i>) and disembarked. They attacked and defeated the Elamite/Chaldean/Aramean army. They conquered the cities N. , N.-di'bina , Ҳилму, Pillatu, and Ҳупапану, cities of the king of the land Elam, and brought the booty on their boats to the other side of the Sea to Bab-salimeti.
1.14	RINAP 3 230, 17	In the time of Ҳаллушу-(Inšušinak), Sennacherib went down to his district and captured the cities N. , N.-di'bina , (and) the lands Ҳилму, Pillatu, and Ҳупапану, districts of his that are on the other side of Bitter Sea, and plundered (them), destroyed (them).
1.15	ABC 1, ii 37	In the 6 th year of Assur-nadin-šumi, Sennacherib went to Elam and raided the city N. (^{urru} na-gi-tu ₄), Ҳилми, Pillatu and Ҳупапану. In response, the Elamite king Hallutuš-Inšušinak marched to Akkad and plundered Sippar. He captured the Babylonian king Assur-nadin-šumi and transported him to Elam.
1.16	de Vaan 1995: 355-357 (= CT 54, 554: r.16')	In a fragmentary letter from general Bel-ibni and the Sealanders to Assurbanipal, Bel-ibni reports on the location and the army of Nabu-bel-šumati. Support is mentioned at the canal (ÍD <i>ḫar-ri</i>) and the Sea (ÍD <i>mar-rat</i>). Nabu-bel-šumati has taken refuge in the city N.
1.17	BRM 1 36 (= MLC n° 1228), Delaporte 1906: 386	In this loan of silver Bamâ owes Nabû-bêl-šumate 12.5 shekels of silver and will have to pay a monthly interest. The document is dated on 1.VI (Aug.-Sept.) of the 15 th regnal year of Šamaš-šum-ukin (653/2 BC) at N.
1.18	VS 6, 9: 1 (VAT 4979)	The debt note is written on 29.IV of the 12 th regnal year of Nabopolassar (614/3 BC) in Borsippa. Nabu-ušeziḫ has to return 50 l grain of his ^{garim} N. to Nabû-kašir.

⁸ The meaning of GARIM is contested. According to Labat (1988⁶) the sign (n° 484) GARIM can be read as ENGUR = *apsû* “abime, océan”. Borger (2003) classifies the sign (n° 790) GARIM as a combination LAGAB × KUG = *tamiru*, *tawirtu* “Flur, Umland”, and indicates that AHw (1341a) and CAD do not accept Ebeling’s (1930: 88) reading *raqqatu* “swamp, marsh”. The Sumerian Dictionary (<http://psd.museum.upenn.edu/nepstd-frame.html>) follows Borger’s interpretation and translates GARIM as “(a type of) meadow”; a definition that Zadok (2016: 413-414) refines in his *Borsippa Geography* as “field, inundated area”. According to Sandowicz (2009) the GARIM determinative in front of *nagû* or *nagitu* is mostly related to date palm groves.

Table 2. Text references of Nagitu-raqqi and Nagitu-of-Elam during the reign of Sennacherib

Nagitu-of-Elam	
RINAP 3 22, iv 32 = 23, iv 30	During Sennacherib's 6 th campaign, the people of the land of Bit-Yakin crossed the Great Sea of the Rising Sun (<i>tam-tum GAL-tum ša ši-it</i> ^d UTU- <i>ši e-bi-ru-ma</i>) and set up their residences in the city N. of the land of Elam (URU. <i>na-gi-ti ša KUR.ELAM.MA.KI</i>).
Nagitu-raqqi	
RINAP 3 15, iv 33' = 16, iv 56 = 17, iv 4 = 18, iii 19' = 21, ii' 5' = 22, iii 64 = 23, iii 56 = 141, 4'	Merodach-Baladan II flew away like a bird to the city Nagite-raqqi, which is in the midst of the sea (<i>ša qa-bal/MARUB₄ tam-tim; ša qé-reb</i> A.AB.BA), when Sennacherib's army approached the Bit-Yakin territory.

Based on the textual references to the Nagitu triad, one can deduce several facts:

- 1) In the early Neo-Assyrian period, Nagitu is already attested as a toponym (Table 1.1). However, the Nagitu of the Tukulti-Ninurta II era was in a different location to the Nagitu attested at the time of Sennacherib and Assurbanipal. According to Lipiński (2000: 94), the early Neo-Assyrian ^{uru}Nagiate must refer to the island in front of Abū Kamālī (Lower Ḥabur) near the present-day Iraqi-Syrian border. At Bāgūz aš-Šnamālī, these islands are located near both banks of the Euphrates River, which corresponds to the ancient description of that particular Nagitu toponym.
- 2) The oldest reference to Nagitu in connection to the Elamite territory dates from the era of Sargon II. In his Khorsabad Annals (Table 1.2), Sargon II attempts to conquer the Nagitu district in the Gambulu province, i.e. the Elamite-Babylonian border region.
- 3) The overwhelming majority of Nagitu attestations derive from the time of Sennacherib. Despite the numerous references of the destruction of Nagitu by Sennacherib, the Bel-ibni archive (Table 1.16) and the tablet from the Yale collection (Table 1.17) confirm the survival of the Elamite city of Nagitu in late Neo-Assyrian period⁹. Although contradicted

⁹ Zadok (2016: 413-414) suggests that the reference to Nagitu in BRM 1 36 (Table 1.17) is associated with the toponym in the Borsippa region, but the link to Nabū-bēl-šumate and the beginning of the Šamaš-šum-ukin revolt (653/2 BC) supports a location of this Nagitu in Elamite territory.

by Frame (1992: 41 n. 56), Dietrich (1970: 4-5) suggested that Nagitu was the capital of Northern Sealand. By translating *ša-pu-nu* as the Aramaic word for “north” in the reading LÚ.GAR.KUR *tam-tim ša-pu-nu* (ABL 540: r. 7), Dietrich (1970: 161 n. 1) hypothesized that the Sealand was split into two parts: the Southern Sealand with Ur as its capital and the Northern Sealand with Nagitu as capital. The idea of Nagitu as a Sealand capital probably derives from the overwhelming presence of Sealand refugees in the early and mid-7th century BC with the first wave of immigration under Merodach-Baladan and the second under Nabû-bêl-šumate, but the texts clearly state that Nagitu was in Elamite controlled territory and is therefore unlikely to have been an official Sealand capital.

- 4) The first reference to Nagitu in the Annals of Sennacherib (Table 1.3) locates the toponym among 39 fortified cities of Bit-Amukani, a Chaldean tribe that dwelled in the region between Uruk and Borsippa (Frame 1992: 38; 1998: 80). This location seems to be confirmed by tablet VS 6 9 (Table 1.18), which refers to a rural area on the outskirts of Borsippa (Zadok 1985: 233 s.v. Nagītu 2). Zadok (2016: 413) associates the ^{GARIM}*na-gi-tu₄* with inundated areas and the formation of the marshland around Borsippa (Cole 1994). The Babylonian town Nagitu near Borsippa (VS 6 9), located in the vicinity of the Chaldean tribe of Bit-Amukani, is therefore distinguishable from the Nagitu in Elamite territory.
- 5) Nagitu-di’bina always occurs together with Nagitu (Table 1.5, 8-10, 12-14), Ħilmu, Pillatu and Ħupapanu and is one of the Elamite districts at the Gulf shore. It is therefore unlikely that Nagitu is the abbreviated form of Nagitu-di’bina.
- 6) The description of Nagitu in the Babylonian Chronicle (Table 1.15) seems remarkably similar to that in the Annals of Assurbanipal, which feeds a suspicion that the compiler of the Babylonian Chronicle used the Annals of Assurbanipal as a historical source for this passage. The compiler of the Chronicle, however, did not differentiate between Nagitu and Nagitu-di’bina; and subsequently treated the Nagitus as a single toponym.
- 7) Nagitu-of-Elam is attested only once (Table 2) in an extended version of the fragment RINAP 3 44, 25b (Table 1.9). In the latter fragment, the appellation “of the land of Elam” is omitted in the toponym Nagitu. Based on RINAP 3 34, 20 (Table 1.8), one can identify Nagitu-of-Elam

(URU.*na-gi-ti ša* KUR.ELAM.MA.KI) as an abbreviation for “Nagitu, district of the king of the land of Elam” (Table 1.8: *na-ge* LUGAL KUR.ELAM.MA.KI).

- 8) Nagitu-raqqi is said to be “in the midst of the sea”, while Nagitu and Nagiti-di’bina are described as Elamite districts “on the other shore of the sea”. Based on this brief description one envisages Nagitu-raqqi to be an island, and Nagitu and Nagiti-di’bina to be located on the mainland.

From the group of royal and archival references, one can determine that Nagitu-of-Elam (URU.*na-gi-ti ša* KUR.ELAM.MA.KI) is a shortened form for “Nagitu, district of the king of the land of Elam” (Table 1.8: *na-ge* LUGAL KUR.ELAM.MA.KI). Nagitu-of-Elam can therefore be excluded as a distinct toponym. Since Nagitu and Nagiti-di’bina are mostly listed consecutively, one can assume that these toponyms refer to two different locations. As for Nagitu-raqqi, further research is needed.

Etymology of Nagitu, Nagitu-raqqi and Nagitu-di’bina

The *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* attributes to *nagitu* (or the Sargonic variation *nagiate/i*) the meaning (CAD N 119 s.v. *nagītu*) “district” in Akkadian. *Nagitu* would have derived from *nagû/nagiu* (CAD N 121 s.v. *nagû* A), which can be either translated as “district, province” or “island”. However, Cavigneaux (1982: 190) does not support the translation “district” of the CAD for *nagû/nagitu*. He suggests that Akkadian *nagi(a)tu* is not a genuine Akkadian word and should instead be associated with the Jewish Aramaic *nagāwātā* “coastal region, island” or the Arabic *najwatun* “elevated ground”; a theory supported by Lipiński (2000: 94). Both Sandowicz (2009) and Zadok (2016: 413-414) connect *nagû/nagitu* with fertile land, even palm groves, in inundated areas. Since *nagitu*, the female form of *nagû*, is only attested in 1st millennium BC Neo-Assyrian and Neo-Babylonian sources after the settlement of the Aramean tribe in Southern Mesopotamia, an Aramaic origin or influence is highly plausible.

Of course, there is also the second element in the name Nagitu: *raqqi* and *di’bina*. *Raqqi* in Nagitu-raqqi derived, according to Frame (1998: 80), from the Akkadian word *raqqu* meaning “turtle” (CAD R 172 s.v. *raqqu* A). For Cole & Gasche (2007: 29 n. 150; also AsaEger 2011: 73) the turtle element in the name Nagitu-*raqqi* indicated that the city (URU.*nagiate-*

raqqi) and the broader district (KUR.*nagiate-raqqi*) were located on an island. Despite the plausibility of the explanation in this particular geographical context at the head of the Persian Gulf, the third toponym Nagītu-di'bina betrays the ethnic character of the area and its influences on the etymology of the name. The second element of the toponym Nagītu-di'bina clearly has an Aramaic origin. *Di* is the genitive indicator in Aramaic, whereas the lexeme *'bn* means “stone, rock” in Aramaic (Hoftijzer & Jongeling 1995: 6) and was used as a construction material in Aramaic references. As Sargon II lists Nagitu as a fortified settlement (table 1.2), the stone element in Nagitu-di'bina may consequently refer to architectural features of the Nagitu buildings. Since the northern Elamite shoreline belonged to the Karkheh and Karun floodplain (Heyvaert, Verkinderen & Walstra 2013: 516), the area could inundate quite easily in Winter/Spring and was unsuitable for mudbrick architecture. The buildings were therefore most likely stone structures.

Returning now to the etymology of Nagitu-raqqi, it may be necessary to revise the Akkadian origin of *raqqu* as well. Next to the first entry of the word *raqqu* “turtle”, the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* (CAD R 173 s.v. *raqqu* B) also indicates that *raqqu* is a topographical term linked to *raqqatu* “swamp, marsh” (CAD R 170 s.v. *raqqatu* B). Although Abraham & Sokoloff (2011: 48) recently revised the West-Semitic origin of *raqqatu* and favoured an Akkadian origin based on its occurrence in 3rd and 2nd millennium BC texts, attestations of the second *raqqu* entry in the *Chicago Assyrian Dictionary* occur exclusively in the Neo-Babylonian period. Moreover, the Aramaic term *raqq* indeed corresponds to the signification “swamp, marsh” (<http://cal.huc.edu>; Jastrow 1950: 1498). The description of Nagitu-raqqi “in the midst of the sea” (Table 2: *ša qabal tamti*)¹⁰ in the Sennacherib Annals corresponds remarkably well with the Aramaic translation of the toponyms.

¹⁰ Zadok (2013: 280) indicates that there is also an Aramaic version for “in the middle/midst” of the marshes during the Neo-Assyrian period. According to him, the name of the ^{lú}*Ma-ši-ḥi* (Reynolds 2003: n. 185:6, NB) derives from the Aramaic *mšy*’ “middle”, meaning “people lying, dwelling in the middle”. Comparing this etymology with the Akkadian reference of the Sennacherib Annals *qabal tamtim* (*tamtum* = sea or lake; CAD T 153-154) “in the midst of the sea”, or more freely “island”, *ma-ši-ḥi* may have a similar designation of a region/population group located in the midst of the sea/lake. An Aramean group, the ^{lú}*Ba/ma-ši-ḥi*, were originally found in the southern marshes (Akk. *appāru*) of the Chaldean Bit-Dakkuri tribe and fled under the rule of sheikh Šamaš-ibni to Bit-Awkani.

If favouring the Aramaic origin of these toponyms, the translation of Nagitu-*raqqi* becomes “island-in-the-marshes” and Nagītu-di’bina becomes “island-of-stone” or “coastal town-of-rocks”. The second element of the toponyms clearly indicates that Nagitu-of-stone and Nagitu-in-the-marshes were two distinct towns/regions, yet in each other’s direct vicinity. Nagitu-in-the-marshes is, as the name clearly indicates, located in the Southern Mesopotamian marshes; Nagitu-of-stone was probably an Elamite coastal town (*ša (ina) ebertain ĪD marrati*) that facilitated access to the Elamite hinterland.

The land, the region or the city of Nagitu?

Now the question remains of how the Nagitu without appellation should be interpreted. As already mentioned above, in the report of Sennacherib’s 6th campaign Nagitu-di’bina and Nagitu are listed together among the conquered Elamite coastal areas (Table 1.5; 1.8; 1.9; 1.10; 1.12; 1.13; 1.14). Thus these locations must have been two distinct places. This leaves us with two possible hypotheses; either Nagitu can be identified with Nagitu-*raqqi* or Nagitu refers to a larger region/district in which the two cities Nagitu-di’bina and Nagitu-*raqqi* were located.

Nagitu without appellation is occasionally preceded by a KUR “land” determinative (Table 1.2; 1.4). In the Annals of Sargon II (Table 1.2), the land of Nagitu points to a district of the Gambulu province. It also seems to emphasise the tribal character of that region. In a fragment of the Sennacherib Annals (Table 1.11), “the land of the city of Nagitu”, with the double determinative KUR URU clearly refers to the larger surroundings of Nagitu and therefore approaches the idea of Nagitu as a broader region. Another Sennacherib attestation (Table 1.4) refers to the “land” (KUR) to which the followers of Merodach-Baladan II fled and settled. Table 1.9 mentions Nagitu as the city where the Chaldeans set up their residences in a context similar to Table 1.4.

Several text fragments also refer to the city of Nagitu (Table 1.7, 1.16, 1.17)¹¹. Merodach-Baladan II fled to the city Nagite-*raqqi* in the midst of the Sea (Table 2) and Bel-ibni (Table 1.16) reports that the grandson of Merodach-Baladan II, Nabu-bel-šumati, had taken refuge in the same city a few decades later. A cuneiform tablet on Nabu-bel-šumati’s finances

¹¹ Table 1.6 cannot be taken into account because the determinative is restored.

with a Babylonian dating formula (Table 1.17) was issued in the city Nagitu. These attestations seem to refer to the city Nagitu on an island under Elamite territorial control that may have been a Chaldean enclave in the marshes. The reason why the Babylonian scribes did not feel the need to specify the second component *raqqi* in the toponym Nagitu is because the etymology of *nagitu* ‘island’ already implied its location and would be considered as a tautology for a trained scribe with knowledge of the area (Table 1.15).

Based on the abovementioned overview, one can conclude that it largely depended on the context when the toponyms Nagitu, Nagitu-raqqi or Nagitu-di’bina were used. If Nagitu and Nagitu-di’bina were combined, Nagitu must have been Nagitu-raqqi. The city of Nagitu could have referred to the Chaldean enclave, but the land or broader area certainly included the Elamite mainland region that provided important waterways for maritime and fluvial transport.

Geographical markers for the Nagitu triad

The description of Nagitu in the Annals of Sargon II as one of the districts of the Gambulu province places Nagitu in the heart of the Aramean territory at the Elamite-Babylonian frontier. Many of the topographical names in the Gambulu region had a West-Semitic (Aramaic) or Akkado-Aramaic hybrid etymology (Zadok 1985: xvii-xxii). In the Hilu and Pillatu district, the neighbouring districts of Nagitu, the Aramaen city lords (*bēl-āli*) *Par-ru-ū* (Baker 2002: 989-990) and *Za-za-az* (Baker 2011: 1440) had even adopted Elamite personal names. According to Zadok (2013: 296-297), these Aramean leaders were called city lords instead of sheikhs in the Neo-Assyrian sources, because they were nominated by the Elamite king to control these strategic locations.

After the reign of Sargon II, numerous Aramean tribes from the Gambulu district became engaged in the anti-Assyrian movement and allied with the Elamite, Babylonian and Sealand rulers (Frame 1992: 167-170; Gorris 2014: 89, 200). The Sealand ruler Merodach-baladan II fled in 700 BC from Sennacherib’s army and settled with members of the Bit-Yakin tribe in Nagitu. In 694 BC Sennacherib organised a retaliation mission and plundered the Nagitu region (Table 1.4-1.14). During the Babylonian Šamaš-šum-ukin rebellion (652-648 BC), the Sealand ruler Nabû-bēl-šumate received asylum in Elam (Frame 1992: 180-182). Based on the Bel-ibni

text (Table 1.16) and the Yale document (Table 1.17), Nabû-bêl-šumate directed his financial transactions and military operations from the Nagitu region (De Vaan 1995). This made the region a prime target for Neo-Assyrian military campaigns.

Not only the etymological markers and historical references, but also the geographical hints in the Neo-Assyrian Annals provide valuable indications for the location of the Nagitu triad. According to the account of Sennacherib's naval campaign, Sennacherib positioned his fleet at the Babylonian Gulf shore near the mouth of the Euphrates and ordered it to cross over to Nagitu on the opposite side of the Gulf (Table 1.11). The fortified settlement of Nagitu-di'bina was probably worth mentioning for the army of Sennacherib, as the stone structures may have been a distinguishable landmark at the flat, sandy Khuzestan coastal plain. The Elamite Gulf shore, however, was unsuitable for docking ships and for men to set foot on (Table 1.12). Therefore, the Neo-Assyrian war fleet had to sail up the Ulaya River¹² to find a quay to disembark. The Ulaya River had good banks to accommodate a harbour for seafaring ships (Table 1.12; Table 1.13). Since the war ships of Sennacherib were able to sail up the river, this Ulaya branch was suitable for fluvial transport.

In an analysis of the position of the paleochannels of the Ulaya, Cole & Gasche (2007: 12-18) situated the river's outlet in the vicinity of Naisan (Spasinou Charax/Alexandria-on-the-Tigris) as a tributary arm of the Tigris in both the Neo-Assyrian period and the Classical era. According to these authors (Cole & Gasche 2007: 44 fig. 74), the watercourse resulting from the junction of the Tigris and Ulaya rivers debouched in the Tigris estuary before entering the Persian Gulf. The Tigris estuary is known to have been in the Southern Mesopotamian marshlands and located far more inland than the Euphrates mouth. Since Neo-Assyrian maritime activities were all launched from the Euphrates outlet into the Persian Gulf and the Tigris outlet is never mentioned in connection to nautical transport, objections against the reconstruction of the Ulaya as tributary arm of the Tigris debouching in the southern marshlands can be made for the Neo-Assyrian period.

¹² The Ulaya from the Sennacherib and Assurbanipal sources is probably the ancient name for the watercourse resulting from the junction of the Karkheh, Dez, and the Karun River. The Uknu River, which is not mentioned again after the reign of Sargon II in the Neo-Assyrian texts, can probably be identified with the Lower Karun as well (for discussion, see Cole & Gasche 2007: 28-30).

Firstly, Classical texts (Arrian vii.7.7; Strabo xvi.1.9) describe the 'Persian' system of cataracts/dams, possibly for irrigation or agricultural purposes (Briant 2006; *id.* 2008), on the Lower Tigris that Alexander the Great removed to create a passageway for ships sailing from the Gulf in the direction of Opis. Since the Opis settlement already existed in the Neo-Assyrian period and Neo-Assyrian fluvial transports took the Arahtu canal downstream instead of the Tigris (RINAP 3 46: 56-70; RINAP 3, 44: 28-30), era the cataract system must have prevented boats from sailing upstream in the pre-Alexandrianian.

Secondly, the marshlands that led to the Tigris outlet were not suitable for manoeuvring larger boats. It is therefore unlikely that the Sidonian war ships which Sennacherib brought to the mouth of the Ulaya crossed the swamp to reach Nagitu.

The cataract system and the inaccessibility for larger boats both suggest that the Tigris outlet was unsuitable for navigation during the Neo-Assyrian period. If the Ulaya debouched in the Tigris before entering the Gulf, as Cole & Gasche (2007: 12-18) suggested, then the Ulaya would have presented the same obstacles as the Tigris in terms of fluvial transport.

These arguments do not exclude, however, the possibility that a riverine connection between the Mesopotamian canal system and the Elamite lowlands was in place; and that a small part of the Lower Tigris (near the Naisan region) was used as connector between Babylonia and Susiana, but it does exclude the linkage with maritime transports.

Moreover, the identification by Cole & Gasche (2007) of the Ulaya River with the paleochannel near Naisan might not necessarily be inaccurate, but it does not correspond to the description of the particular Ulaya branch that Sennacherib and Bel-ibni used to access the Elamite hinterland via the Persian Gulf.

More recent research on the Lower Karkheh and Karun (Heyvaert, Verkinderen & Walstra 2013: 523-524) identified the Karun branch in the direction of Meisan as the channel K2 that was active between the 2nd century BC and the 7th century AD. However, Heyvaert (*et al.* 2013: 505, 523) also identified two other channel belts, of which one paleochannel, the K1 belt, predates the K2 Karun belt. The course of the K1 belt, which runs in a more southwards direction and splits into two outlets in the Lower Khuzestan plain, would match the description of the Neo-Assyrian geographical situation quite well. The northern outlet of this K1

Karun paleo-belt debouched in an area of the Southern Mesopotamian marshes, near present-day Basra. The southern branch of the K1 paleo-channel debouches into the Persian Gulf somewhere between Khorramabad and Abadan, possibly with the aid of some canals.

One such tributary arm of the K1 paleochannel may have been the Naditu canal (Fuchs 1994: 330 § 300-301, 401 § 34), which aided accessibility for sea vessels along the meandering Karun in the Pillatu district. The *ÍD Naditu* means literally in Akkadian “the abandoned canal” (CAD N 67-68 s.v. *nadû*). An artificial branch (*ÍD ḫar-ri*) of the Ulaya River to the sea (*ÍD mar-rat*) in connection to the Nagitu district is also mentioned in a Bel-ibni report (Table 1.16). Since the geological condition at the head of the Persian Gulf invoked delta formation at the river mouths, it seems highly likely that human activity was needed to ensure the accessibility of these seafaring ships to the Elamite hinterland. This would explain the “canal” (*ÍD ḫar-ri*) in the Bel-ibni report (Table 1.16).

The use of the Lower Karun branch as a part of interregional maritime routes is already attested in the Ur III period (c. 2100-2000 BC) when Babylonian vessels sailed from Gu’abba, the Babylonian seaport at the head of the Persian Gulf at that time, to the Elamite harbour of AdamDUN (Laursen & Steinkeller 2017: 75). This Elamite harbour town (Tepe Surkhegan) was most likely situated between modern Shushtar and the Ahwaz bank of the Karun River (Steinkeller 2013: 297). The location of this harbour suggests that AdamDUN was not a coastal harbour on the Iranian littoral, but an inland harbour on the Elamite river network, similar to the Elamite capital Susa.

Based on the Neo-Assyrian geographical information, the island Nagitu-raqqi was probably a Chaldean enclave and an outpost for Nagitu-di’bina, an Elamite coastal settlement at the mouth of a Karun outlet with harbour facilities. This harbour was not situated on the coastline, but along the river bank of the Ulaya. Nagitu-di’bina therefore also facilitated access to the Elamite hinterland via the river outlet of the Ulaya to the Persian Gulf. As a consequence of all this, Nagitu-raqqi and Nagitu-di’bina can be considered as Elamite harbour towns along the Susiana coastline.

Nagitu: its geographical location through history

The Greek authors

With our current knowledge, it remains challenging for modern scholars to make any suggestions on an approximate location for the ancient toponym(s) of Nagitu. Brinkman (1984: 60), who clearly followed the Aramaic etymology of Nagitu-raqqi, suggested that Nagitu was located on an island in the marshes, possibly on the east side of the modern equivalent of the Khor al-Ḥammar, the western part of the present-day Central Marshes of southern Iraq. The main water source of the Ḥammar Marshes is – and was in antiquity – the Euphrates River. Brinkman’s geographical description, stretching from the east bank of Khor al-Ḥammar to the Iranian mainland, comprises practically the entire region of the Southern Marshlands, which offers no assistance in establishing a more precise location for Nagitu.

With the geographical framework of the Neo-Assyrian sources, i.e. an island in the midst of the Chaldean marshes in front of the Susian coast and Karun mouth, Classical and Arabo-Persian sources offer valuable additional information. Interestingly, Greek authors¹³ identify an island with a geographical description similar to Nagitu-raqqi as the island of Mesene. The etymology of Μεσηνη could derive from the Greek root μεσ- (Liddell-Scott 1968: 1107-1108) “middle, midst”, or be a Greek adaptation of the equivalent Aramaic *mšy*’ “middle”¹⁴. This etymology reminds us of the Neo-Assyrian description *qabal (tamti)* “middle”.

In his geographical description of Babylonia and Arabia, Strabo (2nd century AD) mentions a region called Mesene twice. Babylonia bordered in the south on the Persian Gulf and Chaldea until “Arabs of Mesene” (Strabo, *Geogr.* 16.1.8: ὑπὸ τοῦ Περσικοῦ κόλπου καὶ τῶν Χαλδαίων μέχρι Ἀράβων τῶν Μεσηνῶν). In the chapter on the geography of Arabia, Strabo (*Geogr.* 16.4.1) describes Mesene (Μαικίνη) as an Arabian region bounded by the Arabian desert and the marshes of Chaldea

¹³ Pliny the Elder (*Nat. Hist.* 6, 129-131) also mentions the region Mesene, but he describes the larger region of the Kingdom of Characene, and not the most southern part of Characene, i.e. Mesene.

¹⁴ Mesene is later attested as Mēšān/Mēšūn in Middle Persian, Maysān/Mayšān in Syriac, and Maysān in Arabic. For an extensive overview of the possible etymological suggestions, see Schuol 2000: 276-278.

that were fed by the overflowing Euphrates and the sea of Persia. It was a fertile region where vines grew in the midst of the marshes, albeit the frequent displacements of the racks owing to the movement of the waters. Claudius Ptolemy (c. 90-168 AD) mentions in his *Geography* (5.19.1) that the Masani inhabited the northern shore of the Persian Gulf. This region was part of Arabia Felix (Ptolemy, *Geogr.* 6.7), and connected to it was a bay on the Gulf called the Mesanites Bay on which the island of *Apphana*¹⁵ was situated (fig. 1). This island in the Mesanites Bay (*sinus mesanitis*) is attested under the name *Apphadana* in a manuscript of the 4th century geographer Marcian (Hoeschel 1600: 48). His contemporary Philostorgius (c. 368 – c. 439 AD) still refers to the island “inhabited by a tribe called Mesenians”, without specifying the name *Apphadana*. Philostorgius (*Ecclesiastical Hist.* 3.7) describes the region of Mesene as follows: “Before, however, it (Tigris) reaches the sea, it divides its waters into two large channels; and thence it flows into the Persian Sea, the extreme points of its mouths being so far distant from each other, that the two mouths embrace between them a large extent of country. This is an island; it is washed both by the rivers and the sea, and it is inhabited by a tribe called Mesenians”. Stephanus of Byzantium (early 6th century AD: *Ethnica* § M447.14 s.v. Μεσηνη) describes Mesene in his handbook of place names as a Persian region between Tigris and Euphrates.

In sum, the Greek Classical authors called the head of the Persian Gulf bordering Susiana the Mesanites Bay. The Arab/Semitic tribe of the Mesenai inhabited the northern shore of the Gulf and a large island in the Mesanites Bay. On the map of Ptolemy, this island *Apphana* was situated off-shore in the midst of the Chaldean Marshes (fig. 1). By the mid-4th century the island *Apphadana* was bordered by two large channels (Tigris-Karun) and the Persian Gulf, whereas by the early 6th century Mesene had

¹⁵ No Greek manuscript of Ptolemy’s *Geography* (2nd century AD), partially based on the work of Marinus of Tyre (70-130 AD), survives from earlier than the 13th century AD (Dilke 1987: 267-268). In the 9th century AD, it was translated into Arabic and in the 15th century AD into Latin (d’Angelo, 1478. <https://www.wdl.org/en/item/10664/view/1/198/>). Although the Latin text might be inspired or translated from the Greek and/or Arabic manuscript of Claudius Ptolemaios (Stückelberger & Grasshoff 2006), the maps may contain several inaccuracies. When assuming that the orthography *Apphadana* in the *Periplus* of Marcian was more accurate based on the later Arabic parallel renderings (cf. fn. 16), the inserted syllable can hardly be explained grammatically other than as a scribal error by Ptolemy or an erroneously copied manuscript.

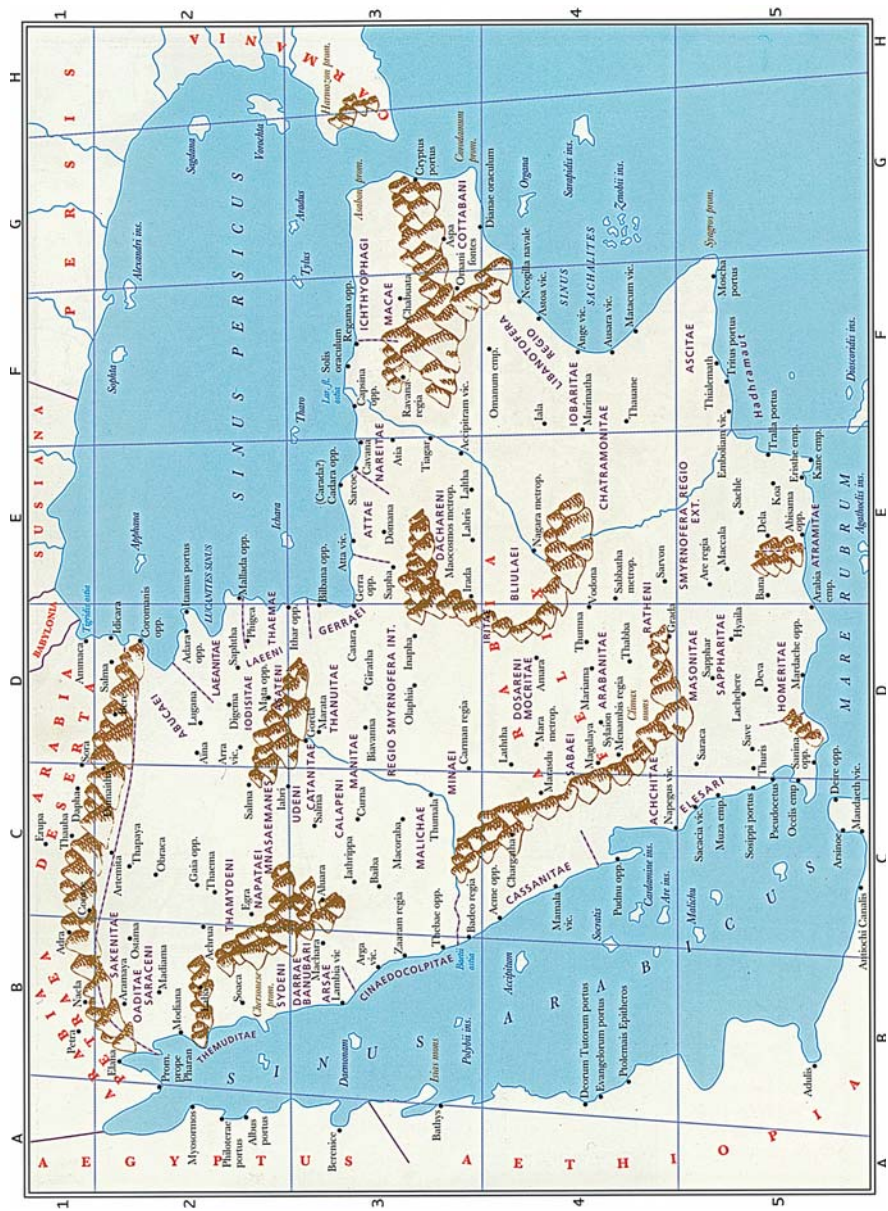


Fig. 1. 6th map of Ptolemy's Geography (after Kennedy, An Historical Atlas of Islam, online version, s.v. Apphana).

become the geographical denomination for the region between the Euphrates and Tigris. From the Seleucid through to the Sasanian era, the toponym Mesene/Mēšān/Maysan referred to the southernmost part of Mesopotamia (Schuol 2000: 280-281). In the Sasanian period, Ard Maysan was a province in the Sasanian Empire with Karkh Maysan as administrative center (Streck & Morony 1991: 910-915) and seat of the Nestorian Church (Bosworth 1983: 594). At that point in time, the Maysan town and region were located more inland along the Shatt el-Arab and had lost contact with the Persian Gulf bay.

The Arab Geographers

After the Islamic conquest, several Arab geographers comment on this region by stating that there was a great island between the two estuaries (Tigris and Karun). This island, which Yāqūt (12th-13th century) names Miyān Rudān “Between the river(s)”¹⁶, is described by Muqaddasī as a *sabkha* or salt-marsh, with the town of ‘Abbadān¹⁷ on the seaboard at one

¹⁶ The Persian toponym Miyān Rudān is mostly translated as “between the rivers”, but critical notes on this translation can be made. The suffix ān (ان-) in Rudān is either an Arabic postposition indicating a dual “the 2 rivers” or the geographical marker denoting a place or location “the place between the river” (cf. Isfahān). Rudān cannot be interpreted as a plural form in Persian, because the suffix -ān (ان-) is used exclusively for plural animate forms. As a river is an inanimate form, Persian grammar suggests the suffix -hā (ها-). Even though Miyān Rudān is attested in Arabic sources, it seems odd to add an Arabic suffix to a non-hybrid name. Interestingly, based on the Persian etymology of the word, the waterways surrounding the island were considered to be multiple branches of a single river. A hypothesis supported by Nāṣir-i Ḥusraw who described ‘Abbadān as an island between two branches of the Šaṭṭ al-‘Arab (Nāṣ 245; Verkinderen 2009: 250). However, most Arab geographers must have interpreted the name as a dual.

¹⁷ There is a discrepancy in the orthography of ‘Abbadān. In the Greek period, the toponym *Apphana* shifts to *Apphadana*. Even though the Arabic form ‘Abbadān (عبدان) with initial ayn and short medial vowel -a- was used in Medieval sources, the Persian orthography (آبادان) with initial aleph and long medial vowel could have been used interchangeably. Regardless of whether the origin of this toponym was Greek, Arabic or Persian (Old Persian or Pahlavi), the transmission from a voiceless labial -p- to a voiced labial -b- must have occurred somewhere between the 4th-10th century through intermediary of Arabic, which is the only of the abovementioned languages that has no voiceless labial -p- in its alphabet.

Several etymologies have been proposed for this toponym. There is the hypothesis that the Arabic orthography for Abadan derived the Arabic *al-‘ābbad* (العباد), followed by the suffix -ān (ان-); a geographical marker denoting a place often used in Persian toponyms. This hypothesis may explain the transmission from the alef to the ayn. An Iranian etymology of the name deriving from *āb*, “water,” and the root *pā*, “watch, guard,” thus “coast-

angle, and Sulaymanān at the other angle on the Dujayl (Karun) estuary (Muq 118). Both al-Ḥuwārizmī (early 9th century) and Muqaddasī (10th century) describe ʿAbbadān as having only the open sea beyond it (Verkinderen 2009: 244-246), but in the era of Yāqūt the city of ʿAbbadān lies up the estuary more than twenty miles (60 km) from the coastline of the Persian Gulf, for the sea has been pushed back thus far by the delta of the great river (Le Strange 1905: 48). The fortified city of ʿAbbadān was constructed as a stronghold against pirates (Iṣṭ 78; Ḥaw 48).

According to the exhaustive analysis of Verkinderen (2009: 257, 244-254, fig. 29), the Tigris mouth shifted somewhat in the late 10th century. In early maps and texts, ʿAbbadān is located west of the Tigris, but in the late 10th century to the east. From the mid-12th century onward, ʿAbbadān was located on an island between two Tigris branches, probably because the pre-10th century branch was reoccupied. The island was then bound by the Shaṭṭ al-ʿArab on the west, the Karun on the north, the Bahmanshīr on the east, and the Persian Gulf on the south (Elwell-Sutton 2016). Depending on their destination, the Gulf or the Persian coastline, ships were diverted to one of the branches. Before the widening of the ʿAdudi channel (Haffar channel) connecting the Karun River with the upper Tigris estuary

guard station” is also suggested (Elwell-Sutton 2016). However, the consonant -d- remains unexplained in this analysis. The historian Ahmed ibn Yahya al-Balāḍurī (c. 892) reports that the town was founded by ʿAbbād bin Ḥusayn Kabeṭī from the Arabian tribe of the Banu Tamim who established a garrison there (Elwell-Sutton 2016). The name would render thus “the town of ʿAbbād” and have a similar construction to ʿAbbadān’s neighbouring town Sulaymanān “the town of Sulayman”. Regardless of the accuracy of the etymology, the fact that a 9th century historian suggested that a town existed by that name during the governorship of Ḥajjāj (695-714) brings back the orthographical transmission period to the 4th-7th century. Tabari’s account of Sasanian history suggests that following Shapur’s II Arabian campaign in 325 AD a section of the North Arabian Bani Tamim was relocated in the region of Ahwaz (Potts 2014: 123). So, this Arab movement supports an early transmission, i.e. early 4th century. However, a highly hypothetical possibility is that the name was transmitted already in the Achaemenid period. After the Achaemenid annexation of Susiana and its incorporation into the administrative system, it is possible that some of the Susian toponyms received a Persian name. Although the Achaemenids had an extensive and well maintained channel system connecting Babylonia with Susiana (Waezeggars 2010: 804), some periods of the year they were still dependent on maritime transport. The region of Nagitu – Mesene – Apphadana must have played a prominent role. In Old Persian vocabulary the root *ap(p)adana-* translates literally as “palace” or “architectural construction” (Schmitt 2014: 132); a meaning rather similar to the Aramaic component diʿbina in Nagitu-diʿbina. The Old Persian toponym could consequently be rendered into Greek during the Alexandrian era and later during the infiltration of the Arab tribes in the Mesanites Bay (c. 2nd century) rendered into Arabic.

from Ahwaz to Basrah, cargo boats had to pass down the Karun estuary past Sulaymanān and ʿAbbādān, out to sea, and then up the Tigris estuary past Bayān (Muhammarah/Khoramshahr) to Ubullah (modern Basra).

Although any suggestion on the location of Nagitu remains highly hypothetical, the accounts of the Arab geographers describing the *sabkha* Miyān Rudān with the town ʿAbbādān, inhabited by the Arab Banu Tamīm tribe, and the town Sulaymanān on the other side of the river bank providing access to the Susiana hinterland corresponds remarkably well with the description of Nagitu-diʿbina and Nagitu-raqqi. Since both the Classical authors and the Arab geographers indicated a considerable progradation of the Khuzestan coastline and the numerous modifications of the Tigris and Karun River courses, the Abadan coastal *sabkha* “in between the Tigris branches” must have been in the Neo-Assyrian period an island (Nagitu-raqqi) further offshore than in the Medieval era. Consequently, the ancient Nagitu-diʿbina was probably located more inland in the direction of Ahwaz in comparison with the Medieval Susiana coastal towns¹⁸.

Conclusion

The toponym Nagitu is a rather common topographical name in the historical geography of the Neo-Assyrian period. When following the West Semitic etymology of Nagitu “island, coastal region, elevated ground”, the toponym could be used for river islands, marsh islands and/or *sabkhas* as well as coastal towns.

¹⁸ When looking at the maps of Persia through history for instance (Alai 2005), one can determine that the head of the Persian Gulf and the outlet of the Rivers Euphrates, Tigris and Karun are always drawn differently, even on maps of the same historical period. Some maps of the 17th century show several small islands in the Shatt el-Arab/Arvand Rud (Alai 2005: pl. 53, Pl. 54), others one large peninsula (Basra island) (Alai 2005: pl. 57), and another group depicts a large bay (Alai 2005: pl. 48). The many shapes of the head of the Persian Gulf probably indicates that the Euphrates-Tigris-Karun delta mouth remained heavily subjected to human interference, such as dam constructions and dredging activities, shifting watercourses and progradation of Khuzestan plain throughout history. The only map that seems to give a more detailed image of the head of the Persian Gulf is the planisphere of Diogo Ribeiro (c. 1530). This map shows two large estuaries (Couto *et al.* 2006: 106-107 pl. 17); the first one is the confluence of Euphrates & Tigris with the Basra peninsula and the second one is a large embayment where nowadays the Shadegan Marshes and the mudflats of Khor-al Amaya & Khor Musa are situated. The elevated strip of land squeezed in between these estuaries is – although not explicitly mentioned on the map – the Abadan Island.

For the first half of the 1st millennium BC, the toponym Nagitu refers at least to four different locations, all matching the West Semitic etymology of Nagitu. The Nagitu from the Tukulti-Ninurta II era refers to an island in front of Abu Kamali on the Lower Ḥabur. The fortified Nagitu in the Chaldean Bit-Amukani area and in the Neo-Babylonian debt note is probably located in the vicinity of Borsippa, where the Ḥammar marshlands created an adequate environment for a toponym by the name Nagitu. The cluster of Nagitu-raqqí “island-in-the-marshes” and Nagitu-di’bina “coastal town-of-rocks” was instead part of Elamite Susiana. In this Elamite Nagitu region, Nagitu-raqqi was probably a *sabkha* in front of the Elamite coast, where an enclave of Chaldean refugees of the Bit-Yakin tribe had settled with approval of the Elamite king. Nagitu-di’bina was a fortified Aramean settlement under Neo-Elamite governance with harbour facilities. Due to the difficulties seafaring ships encountered in docking at the Susiana littoral, the Nagitu harbour must have been located inland at the mouth of the Karun, providing ships with access to the waterways of the Elamite hinterland. In this way, Nagitu can be considered an Elamite harbour town on the Susiana coastline providing an Elamite mooring place on the Elam-Sealand maritime transport route.

Taking into account the progradation of the coastline at the head of the Persian Gulf, the shifting watercourses of the Tigris and Karun River throughout history, and the account of the Classical and early Arab Geographers, the ancient sites of Nagitu-raqqi and Nagitu-di’bina were probably located somewhere between Abadan island and Ahwaz.

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FROM BOSPORUS ... TO BOSPORUS: A NEW INTERPRETATION AND HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF THE OLD PERSIAN INSCRIPTION FROM PHANAGOREIA*

BY

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Abstract: The article offers a new interpretation of the fragment of an Old Persian inscription discovered during the Phanagoreia excavation in 2016. The first publishers of the document, V.D. Kuznetsov and A.B. Nikitin, concluded that Xerxes should be identified as the author of the text, and connected the appearance of the stone in Phanagoreia with a hypothetical military expedition by that king against the Greek *poleis* of the Cimmerian Bosphorus, supposedly carried out before the invasion of Balkan Greece. Nevertheless, the remnants of the text in the extant lines 1 and 2 give stronger grounds for attributing the inscription to Darius I and for connecting its creation with that king's Scythian campaign (ca 513–512 B.C.). The evidence provided by Herodotus (4. 87), Ctesias of Cnidus (*FGrHist* 688 F 13. 21) and Dionysius of Byzantium (52) testifies to the erection on Darius' orders of a complex of monumental constructions in the immediate proximity of the bridge over the Thracian Bosphorus, and those constructions

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included a cuneiform inscription that clearly had symbolic significance. On hearing rumours of the king's failures in Europe the citizens of Byzantium and Chalcedon destroyed these monuments for the purpose of proclaiming their own liberation from Persian control and put to shame the ὕβρις that Darius had displayed – thus, as a consequence, bringing punishment upon themselves (Hdt. 5. 26; Ctes. *FGrHist* 688 F 13. 21; Polyæn. 7. 11. 5; Dion. Byz. 14). A fragment of Darius' inscription might have been brought to Phanagoreia as a kind of trophy, where it would have political significance because that *polis* was founded by citizens of Teos in Asia Minor who fled the threat of enslavement by the Persians in 546 B.C. (Hdt. 1. 168; Strabo. 14. 1. 30) and had every reason to persist in their hatred of the Great King. It cannot, however, be ruled out that the stone found its way to the Cimmerian Bosphorus as a simple piece of ship's ballast.

Keywords: Phanagoreia, Old Persian inscription, Darius I, Scythian campaign, Greco-Persian relations, Byzantium, Chalcedon, Thracian Bosphorus, Istros, bridges

Introduction

The fragment of an inscription written in the usual Old Persian cuneiform script excavated in Phanagoreia (DFa)¹ in 2016 is a unique find of immense importance.² Its discovery prompts investigation and invites new hypotheses. In this article we would like to offer our view of the object and its probable historical context. This view is significantly different from the one put forward by the first publishers of the inscription, but that is only to be expected in a case such as this (Pl. 1).

The Persian text

We start with the Persian text itself and possible ways of restoring, reading and interpreting it.

According to Kuznetsov and Nikitin, a relatively small stone fragment that measures 41.2 × 35.9 × 11.8–14.8 centimetres has been preserved of the original inscription, probably stele. The front is carefully made and polished, whereas the back was left totally untouched. At the top, at the bottom and on the left, some parts of the fragment are broken off. The right

¹ The DFa abbreviation was invented by Shavarebi 2019.

² See the publication (Kuznetsov & Nikitin 2018; 2019) and the historical interpretation (Kuznetsov 2018; 2019).

side of the stele's front face is partly damaged so that the polished surface has been preserved only near the back of the stone. Naturally, no written signs have been preserved in that area. The cuneiform characters are incised in lines that are 6.0–6.2 cm apart. The height of the characters varies between 5.0 and 5.5 cm. The depth of the characters reaches 1.2 cm. They are clear-cut and fine, carved by a professional. The lower part of the stele as well as its corners on the left side are slightly damaged by fire: in those areas there are traces of burnt material which might come from small wooden boards or planks that fell on it in a fire. In that area the marble is covered with black coating³. The distance between the lines and the height of the characters make our inscription comparable to the monumental inscriptions of the Great Kings⁴, but it was written on a separate stele and therefore has no exact analogy in the corpus of Old Persian texts (one exception is the Darius' Suez Canal stele)⁵. The physical characteristics of the text suggest that the stele was of considerable size⁶ and indicate that the inscription was intended for public display⁷. It must have served as a propagandistic text, and its impressive dimensions will have made it a very striking one. Moreover, if one compares it with Old Persian inscriptions on individual stone slabs, one can see that the stele has more in common with Greek than with Old Persian epigraphy.

³ Kuznetsov & Nikitin 2018: 154–155.

⁴ But the distance between lines and the height of the characters in the Old Persian columns of the Behistun Inscription were distinctly smaller – 3.8 cm and 2.8 cm respectively (Schmitt 1991: 18).

⁵ M.P. Canepa makes a number of important observations in his review of Old Persian epigraphic practices: 'Many inscriptions in ancient Iran were meaningful only as graphic rather than textual signifiers, especially those looming high above on cliffs or adorning nearly inaccessible architectural features in palaces'; 'Achaemenid inscriptions appear mainly in two contexts: as monumental reliefs carved into the living rock, often in close proximity to figural relief sculpture, or incorporated into the architectural fabric of palaces, again near extensive relief decoration' (Canepa 2015: 12, 14).

⁶ We quote the first publishers' estimate: 'Judging from the thickness of the marble slab and the fairly large size of the cuneiform signs, the stele must have been no less than 2 m high and 1 m wide.' (Kuznetsov & Nikitin 2019: 2). It is hard to say what served as a basis for this conclusion; if we look for guidance at the Darius' Suez Canal stele that this stele was at least 3 meters high, 2.30 meters wide, and 78 centimeters in thickness (Kent 1942: 415).

⁷ The Behistun inscription, located on a cliff at a height of 61.8 meters, was totally illegible from the ground – in fact, it was not intended for reading (Schmitt 1991: 18; Canepa 2015: 16); but the erection of a stele might have been a different matter.

The inscription contains six preserved lines, in which both beginning and end are lost. In the first line, one sign is fully visible and the sign that immediately follows is partly legible; in the second line, three signs are fully legible and two more are partly visible at the beginning and at the end of the preserved part of the line; in the third and fourth lines, four signs are almost fully legible and one more – the first sign – is partly visible; in the fifth line, three signs are preserved and there are traces of two more signs; and, finally, the sixth line contains four legible signs. Since all the lines, except the first one, contain a word-dividing sign, it can be stated with confidence that in the second to fourth lines we see traces of two words, and in the first and final lines (in which a word-divider stands at the line beginning) of one word.

We start by reproducing the text of the inscription (in which some of the signs have to be restored on the basis of the partly preserved cuneiform signs) and then transliterate it.

	The Old Persian text	Transliteration:
x+1	𐎧𐎥 𐎧𐎥	-v-h-
x+2	𐎧𐎥(?) 𐎧𐎥 𐎧𐎥 𐎧𐎥	-u(?)-š : x-š-
x+3	𐎧𐎥(?) 𐎧𐎥 𐎧𐎥 𐎧𐎥	-a(?)-v-m : a-
x+4	𐎧𐎥(?) 𐎧𐎥 𐎧𐎥 𐎧𐎥	-r(?)-y-m : a-
x+5	𐎧𐎥(?) 𐎧𐎥 𐎧𐎥 𐎧𐎥 𐎧𐎥(?)	-d(?)-m : a-k ^u - or a-g-(?)
x+6	𐎧𐎥 𐎧𐎥 𐎧𐎥 𐎧𐎥	: m-r-t-

In the first line, the publishers believe that King Darius (I)'s name is used in the genitive case – *Dārayavahauš*⁸. This is certainly possible since the syllabic writing of that word is d-a-r-y-v-h-u-š, but, in the light of other inscriptions that contain Darius' name in the genitive case⁹, doubt may be expressed about the conclusion that the publishers reach on the basis of this reading of line 1: 'The preserved part of King Darius' name in the genitive case as well as the archaeological context of the discovery allow one to date the inscription to the reign of his son Xerxes (486–465 B.C.)'¹⁰.

⁸ Kuznetsov & Nikitin 2018: 157; 2019: 5.

⁹ There are a number of occurrences in the corpus of Old Persian inscriptions: DPc; DPd, 10; DPi; DNd; DZc, 3; XPb, 19; XPc, 14; XPd, 13; XPe, 3; XPf, 17, 25; XPh, 11; XPj; XPk; XSc; XE, 19; A¹Pa, 16.

¹⁰ Kuznetsov & Nikitin 2018: 158; 2019: 6. G.P. Basello, Professor at the University of Naples (L'Orientale), whose opinion Kuznetsov & Nikitin report, observes that 'the

We shall say more about the archaeological context later, but the thing to note here is that Darius' name in the genitive case is quite common not only in the inscriptions of Darius' son, Xerxes, but also in those of the king himself¹¹. So, line 1 of the text in no way rules out an ascription of the inscription to Darius himself¹². Nevertheless, it is line 2 that is most informative for the purpose of identifying the author. Kuznetsov and Nikitin suggest that it reads [*dahya*]*uš* ('countries') *xaša*, or, probably, *xaš[iyam]* ('truth'), but we are dealing with two words and they ought to stand in a meaningful relationship with each other, so, out of the whole range that contain the syllables -š and x-š-, we should give priority to *combinations* of two words in which the first ends with -š and the second starts with x-š-. The solution proposed by G.P. Basello matches this requirement: d-a-r-y-v-u-š : x-š-a-y-š-i-y ('Darius the King'). Xerxes' name (x-š-y-a-r-š), which would correspond to the first publishers' interpretation of the text, is ruled out for the first word of line 2 as the sign that precedes š- resembles u-. Theoretically, Xerxes' name cannot be ruled out for the second word, which starts with x-š-, but the combination 'Darius the King' is a recurrent element across the Old Persian corpus and for this reason we believe that Basello's restoration is preferable¹³. The mention of the name

signs -v-h- (line x+1) should be part of the genitive of "Darius", maybe in the royal titulary of Xerxes, so "[Xerxes, the king, son] of Darius, [the king]"; but *obviously there are many other possibilities* [emphasis added], since we have only a few signs' (Kuznetsov & Nikitin 2018: 157).

¹¹ For instance, it is to King Darius I that the following expressions in inscriptions belong: *Dārayavahauš XŠhyā višiyā* (DPc; DPi: 'in the house of Darius the King'); *Dārayavahauš XŠhyā xšačam* (DZc, 3: 'the kingdom of Darius the King'); *vačabara Dārayavahauš xšāyašiyahyā* (DNd: 'the clothes-bearer of Darius the King' – about Aspathines); *vašnā Auramazdāhā manacā Dārayavahauš xšāyašiyahyā* (DPd, 9–11: 'by the grace of Ahura Mazda and me, Darius the King...').

¹² Of course, we cannot altogether discard other possible readings of the first line, but they are far from numerous. Firstly, as the preceding sign is not visible and it may be assumed that there is word division, the syllables v-h might be the beginning of a word. Yet the number of possibilities comes down to the word *vahišta* ('the best') and proper nouns derived from the same root: *Vahuka*, *Vahyasparuva*, *Vahyazdāta* (Schmitt 2014: 273–274). Secondly, if we assume that the signs v-h were not word-initial, then we will acquire a wider set of potential restorations, but make no contribution to understanding the meaning of the text; among such words are: *āvahana* ('settlement', noun), *avahya* ('to ask for help', verb), *avahyarādiy* ('therefore', adverb), etc. From a methodological point of view, it should be stated somewhere that all the listed possibilities are from the extant Old Persian corpus. Obviously, it is also possible, from a theoretical point of view, that a word not attested until now occurs there.

¹³ Kuznetsov & Nikitin comment on it as follows: "This particular combination of signs is very common in the royal Achaemenid inscriptions. It is also possible that the

and the title of the King in the nominative case is usually preceded by the verb *ḡātiy* ('he says') in all inscriptions¹⁴.

By contrast with lines 1–2, the other four lines of the preserved text admit of no entirely convincing restoration.

The first sign in line 3 cannot be accurately identified, but, as the only preserved parts of the sign are two vertical wedges and a distinctly visible horizontal wedge above them, its appearance allows three possibilities: a, d, u. Deciding between them is made easier by the fact that we are looking for words that end with -a-v-m or -u-v-m. (The ending -d-v-m does not seem to appear anywhere in the corpus of Old Persian inscriptions). In this case a- is probably the preferable choice: the word *avam* (a-v-m) is the accusative singular of the demonstrative pronoun 'this'. The word *avam* appears in the few combinations of words in Darius I's inscriptions in which the following word also starts with a- (as in the present text): *avam agarbāya* (DB V. 27–28: 'I captured this'), *avam Araxam* (DB III. 82: 'this Arakha'), *avam asmānam* (DZc. 1; DSf. 2; DSt. 2–3; DE. 3–4: about Ahura Mazda's creation – 'this heaven'). However, that there *are* also words that end with -u-v-m and, although they are less frequent, they cannot be entirely ruled out of count; there is, for instance, the adverb *paruvam* (DB I. 9; DSe. 43, 47: 'previously'), to which G.P. Basello has drawn attention¹⁵.

In line 4, one word ends with -y-m and the following one starts with a-. The preserved parts of the very first sign are a vertical wedge and two or three slightly visible horizontal wedges. They allow three possibilities:

name and the title are written here in the genitive case: *Dārayavahauš: xšāyathiyahy*" (Kuznetsov & Nikitin 2019: 5). E. Shavarebi notes: 'The most plausible option for the first word remains *Dārayavauš*, and we empirically know that a king's name in Achaemenid inscriptions is followed by a royal title. Therefore, the most probable reconstruction of this line of DFa would be <: d-a-r-y-v]-u-š : x-š-[a-y-θ-i-y :> = *Dārayava] uš xš[āyaθiya* 'Darius the King'.' (Shavarebi 2019: 7). Cf. also the view independently expressed by Tuplin in private letter to the authors: 'x-š in line 2 should be the start of *xšāyaθiya* (no other word seems to be available, except Xerxes' name – and the corpus contains no example of that being preceded by a word ending with š). The letter š at the end of the previous word would suit the end of Darius' name (indeed the only context in which the corpus contains a word ending -š followed by *xšāyaθiya* is precisely in the phrase "Darius the King"); but, again, it is not clear that the letter before š is (as it should be) u'.

¹⁴ Cf. Avram's restoration: '-- *θāti Dārayava]uš xš[āyaθiya --* ('Darius, the King, proclaims') (Avram 2019: 17).

¹⁵ Kuznetsov & Nikitin 2018: 158.

b, r, d. If the sign is b, there is only one known word with ending -b-y-m: *patiyazbayam* (XPh. 38: ‘I declared’), and if it is d the word may be restored as *niyašādayam* (DNa. 36: ‘I sat’, ‘I made ... able to sit’). Nevertheless, in view of the length of horizontal wedges in front of the vertical one (the middle wedge is clearly slightly longer than the other two), r is the only reasonable reading. There are only two known words that end with -r-y-m: *niyačārayam* (DB I. 64: ‘I repaired’ or ‘I worked on’) and *viyata-rayam* (DB V. 24–25: ‘I crossed’, ‘I passed through’). A. Avram preferred to restore [*adam niyačā*]rayam, ‘j’ai restauré, j’ai fait restaurer’ in line 4, but provided no further comment on his choice¹⁶. E. Shavarebi, by contrast, has reconstructed the line as follows: ... *draya: viyata*]rayam: *a*[*vadā* ...], ‘... (I) crossed [the sea?]. Then?’ and suggested that this restoration ‘would be the most plausible option, if we assume that Darius is speaking of his Western Scythian expedition and crossing the Thracian Bosphorus or the Danube in this inscription’. In support of this, he refers to column V of Darius’ Behistun inscription: “In this case, it reminds of the fifth column of the Bisotun inscription, where Darius reports his campaign against the Eastern Sakā in Central Asia and mentions crossing a sea/river” (DB V. 24f)¹⁷. An earlier passage in the same inscription, where the verb appears in the first-person plural in reference to the crossing of a river (*Tigrām: viyatarayāmā: avadā* (DB I. 88: ‘we got across the Tigris. Then...’), provides further support, although he does not mention it. The restoration of the verb *viyatarayam* in line 4 therefore seems to be the most probable solution for both epigraphical and historical reasons.

In the case of the first sign in line 5 the situation is the same as with the first sign in line 3. The number of possibilities is limited to three symbols: a, d, u. The following word-final sign is -m, and the next word starts with a-. If the word ended with -a-m, we are again dealing with the ending of either a noun (for instance, the accusative or genitive of an -a stem noun) or a verb (first-person singular imperfect), and the number of possible restorations is theoretically infinite. To restore -u-m gives the accusative ending of a noun (u-stem), and this too leads nowhere. Nonetheless, if the correct reading is -d-m, things are better, since it could be the first-person personal pronoun a-d-m (‘I’). The first sign of the following word resembles a staple and is followed by the vestiges of a vertical wedge. Either

¹⁶ Avram 2019: 17.

¹⁷ Shavarebi 2019: 8.

a-k^u- or a-g- is a possible reading. The fifth line of the inscription could therefore contain one of two expressions applied to the activities of Darius I elsewhere in the corpus of the Old Persian inscriptions: *adam akunavam* ('I made', 'I built': DB I. 68, 72; IV. 3, 40, 45, 59, 89; V. 2; DSe. 34; DSf. 21; DSg. 3; DSj. 2–3) or *adam agarbāyam* ('I captured': DB IV. 32; DNa. 17; DSe. 16).

In the sixth and last preserved line, the beginning of the word is, fortunately, well preserved and can be transliterated as m-r-t-. One can state with certainty that there are only three known Old Persian words that correspond to the signs used in line 6. They are *mart[iya]* ('man', Avestan *marəta*, New Persian *mārd*, originating in Common Iranian **mryt* = mortal), the same word in its plural form *mart[iyā]* ('men'), and the proper name *Mart[iya]*. Of these the third seems to be the least probable as the name is only attested once (DB II. 8, 12–13)¹⁸. The last line of the preserved inscription fragment therefore contained a reference to an individual or a number of individuals, but who he/they was/were is impossible to say with certainty. Elsewhere in the corpus of Old Persian inscriptions *martiya/martiyā* either refers abstractly to a man or men in general or labels a particular man or men who can be either loyal subjects or rebel leaders¹⁹. In itself, then, the word had no clearly defined connotations, unlike, for instance, *kāra-* ('people', 'army'), which usually appears in socio-political or military contexts, or *dahyu-* ('people', 'country'), which was used in administrative contexts.

¹⁸ Kent 1953: 203; Schmitt 2014: 212–213.

¹⁹ The contexts in which the words *martiya/martiyā* occur are varied, but fall into two groups. (1) In its abstract sense the word is used to denote *a man/men* in general in passages that describe relationships between the monarch and his subjects (translated by R.G. Kent): 'Within these countries, the man who was loyal, him I rewarded well; (him) who was evil, him I punished well' (DB I. 21); 'the man who shall be a Lie-follower, him do you punish well' (DB IV. 38); 'the man who cooperated with my house, him I rewarded well; whoso did injury, him I punished well' (DB IV. 65); 'the man who shall be a Lie-follower or who shall be a doer of wrong – to them do not be a friend, (but) punish them well' (DB IV. 68), etc. (2) The word is used in its concrete sense to denote a particular man or men who are loyal or hostile to the king: 'there was one man, a Magian, named Gaumata; he rose up from Paishiyauvada' (DB I. 36); 'I with a few men slew that Gaumata the Magian, and those who were his foremost followers (*martiyā*)' (I. 56–58); 'and one man, a Babylonian, named Nidintu-Bel, son of Ainaira – he rose up in Babylon' (I. 77), etc. We tentatively suggest that mention was made here of the Scythian king whom Darius set out to punish.

Unique though it is, there is a limit to what this new text can be expected to tell us. Nonetheless we shall try to draw some preliminary conclusions based purely on the reading and interpretation of the text. The probable appearance of King Darius' name in line 1 (albeit in the genitive case) and in line 2, and the appearance of the king's title in line 2 make it possible to attribute the inscription to King Darius – presumably Darius I, who is associated with the largest number of inscriptions in the Achaemenid Corpus²⁰. An appearance of Xerxes' name in line 2 is virtually out of the question. Line 4 may allude to something slightly more specific: for, if the restoration of *viyatarayam* is correct, the King was said to have crossed a sea or river, and (in the light of other arguments in this article), the reference could be to his crossing of the Thracian Bosphorus. If we accept that line 5 contains the word *akunavam*, we might conjecture that it speaks about construction on the king's orders of an architectural or engineering structure – but it is no more than conjecture²¹; if it contains the word *agarbāyam*, the inscription could refer to the capture of a country, town or enemy leader. The sixth, and last, line of the text permits the certain restoration of a reference to a man or a group of people, but his/their identity remains entirely obscure. This is, of course, hardly surprising since the fragment preserves only a tiny (if indeterminable) proportion of the original document.

The best we can do by way of restoration of the text is as follows:

...*Dāraya*]vaha[uš](?)| [*xšāya*ḡiyahyā or Xšhyā(?) ... ḡātiy *Dāraya*va]
u(?)š : *xšāl*[yaḡiya ... *draya*(?)] *avam* : al[*dam hadā kārā*(?) *viyata*]
rayam(?) : al[*vada a*]d(?)*am* : *akul*[*navam*] or *agal*[*rbāyam*]... :
mart[*iya*] or *mart*[*iyā*]...
...of Darius(?) [the King(?) ... says] Darius the King ... [the sea(?)]
this I [with army(?)] crossed(?) then(?) I made *or* captured... man
or men...

²⁰ According to the latest edition of the corpus of Old Persian inscriptions (Schmitt 2009), 83 inscriptions out of 181 belong to Darius I.

²¹ In the light of the historical context discussed below (the building of the bridge across the Bosphorus), this restoration deserves special attention. Of course, the same verb is used in royal epigraphic texts in relation to the inscriptions themselves: 'this is the inscription which I made' (*i(ya)m dipīmai ty(ām) adam akunavam*) (DB IV. 89).

Greek sources

With the text established as well as it can be, the next requirement is a historical interpretation of the monument that clarifies the circumstances of its creation and the reasons for its ending up in Phanagoreia.

Examining the historical setting of the inscription's composition, Kuznetsov links it to a (purely conjectural) military expedition of Xerxes to the Bosphorus before or simultaneously²² with the invasion of Greece²³. As we have already noted, this is entirely based on the apparent presence of Darius' name in the genitive case in line 1²⁴. The argument is obviously weak both in terms of textual interpretation and from a general historical viewpoint²⁵, and it seems more promising to associate the monument with Darius I (which is the natural inference from the presence of his name in two lines of the text) and not with his son. Kuznetsov does not completely rule out this possibility, although he thinks it hardly probable²⁶, but his treatment of the possibility that the inscription was created during Darius' Scythian campaign is oddly selective: he draws attention to Herodotus' report that an inscription was erected by the king when the Persian troops reached the River Tearos in Thrace (Hdt. 4. 90)²⁷, but he entirely ignores

²² The latter option looks quite improbable because it would have led to a division of Persian forces.

²³ Kuznetsov 2018: 166–180; 2019: 8–43.

²⁴ Kuznetsov & Nikitin 2018: 158; Kuznetsov 2018: 160, 166.

²⁵ Putting aside the question of Persian political influence in the Cimmerian Bosphorus, an issue that requires special treatment, and the problem of a direct Achaemenid military invasion/presence (which poses more problems), we note that archaeologically attested destruction in a number of Bosporan cities cannot at the moment be accurately dated, assessed or assigned a specific cause. We plan to discuss this set of problems in a separate paper; for the moment, see the summary of arguments against an Achaemenid conquest of the Bosporan state in Balakhvantsev 2018.

²⁶ Kuznetsov 2018: 161–164.

²⁷ The problem of that inscription is also quite interesting, and there are more data than those provided by Herodotus. As early as 1854, a report was published about a stele with an inscription in 'the Assyrian language', found 20 years earlier in the area of the town of Bunarhissar (modern Pınarhisar) in European Turkey – presumably, in the vicinity of the place where the Tearos river might have flown (according to one view, the river is located in the vicinity of Pınarhisar: Vasilev 2015: 59–61; cf. Boteva 2011: 741, n. 32 – with references). The stele, however, mysteriously vanished without trace (Jochmus 1854: 44). In 1915 E. Unger described the discovery of a stele which he associated with the lost Bunarhissar monument and identified, accordingly, as Darius' River Tearos inscription (Unger 1915, 3–16). On the monument in general, see the substantial work by Vasilescu 2007: 117, 122–127; cf. Schmitt 1988: 34–36. Kuznetsov's opinion that 'not a single

another much more significant and detailed piece of information that appears just a few paragraphs earlier in the same book of *The Histories*²⁸.

In his account of the beginning of the Scythian campaign ‘the Father of History’ relates the following (4. 87):

Darius then having gazed upon the Pontus sailed back to the bridge, of which Mandrocles a Samian had been chief constructor; and having gazed upon the Bosphorus also, he set up two pillars²⁹ by it of white stone³⁰ with characters cut upon them, on the one Assyrian³¹ and on the other Hellenic³², being the names of all the nations which

Old Persian inscription has so far been found outside the Achaemenid domain’ has to be reviewed in the light of another important item to which we shall return later.

²⁸ To be fair the analysis provided in other studies cannot be viewed as exhaustive either. See Merle 1916: 11–12; Nevskaya 1953: 60–61; Chernenko 1984: 57–58; Loukopoulou 1989: 88–89; Briant 2002: 198; Tuplin 2010: 294–295; Asheri, Lloyd & Corcella 2007: 644–645. The most detailed account: Schmitt 1988: 32–34; Vasilescu 2007: 117, 119–121 – regrettably, without comparison with the data provided by other ancient written sources (see below).

²⁹ Schmitt (1988: 33) points out the peculiarity of the use of this word in relation to an Old Persian inscription.

³⁰ The marble of the inscription from Phanagoreia is light grey in colour (Kuznetsov & Nikitin 2018: 152; 2019: 2). This does not mean that it cannot be identified with the stone used for Darius’ Thracian Bosphorus stelae. The expression ‘of white stone’ (ἐκ λίθου λευκοῦ) is quite common in Greek epigraphic texts, and it is unlikely that the marble would have been perfectly snow-white in every case. More probably Herodotus is merely employing a common (virtually cliché) expression. One should remember that he had probably not seen the remains of Darius’ pillars himself. On this issue, see n. 40 below.

³¹ The expression ‘Assyrian writing’ (τὰ Ἀσσύρια γράμματα), found not only in Herodotus but also in other ancient authors (Thuc. 4. 50. 2; Diod. 2. 13. 2; Strabo. 14. 15. 9; Them. Ep. 21), was used by Greeks to denote the cuneiform of Mesopotamia and Iran in general (Nylander 1968: 118–136; Schmitt 1988: 33; 1992: 21–35) and perhaps other forms of Eastern writing as well (Lewis 1977: 2–3 n. 3).

³² There were (at least) two stelae. This allows us to amend the first publishers’ statement that the inscription was a *Persian and Greek bilingual* (Kuznetsov & Nikitin 2018: 158). No example of such a bilingual has so far been discovered, and a Greek text translated from Old Persian on an individual stele seems more probable. (For a stele with a Persian document in Greek one may compare the letter from Darius to Gadatas: ML. 12; Briant 2001; Tuplin 2009, but this is an object of post-Achaemenid date, and the status of the text is disputed). It was also normal practice for Persian kings to make inscriptions in different languages on *individual* stelae: cf. e.g. Xerxes’ famous *Daiva* inscription from Persepolis and Pasargadae which is now known to exist in five copies, including those in the Elamite and Akkadian (Abdi 2006–2007: 46). In 1967 a stone slab was found near Persepolis; it contained an Old Persian inscription belonging to Xerxes, in which the king

he was leading with him³³: and he was leading with him all over whom he was ruler. The whole number of them without the naval force was reckoned to be seventy myriads including cavalry, and ships had been gathered together to the number of six hundred. These pillars the Byzantines conveyed to their city after the events of which I speak, and used them for the altar³⁴ of Artemis Orthosia³⁵, excepting

repeated – practically word for word – the characteristics that his father, Darius, had given himself in the text on his Naqsh-e Rostam tomb (XPl): for more detail, see Rung & Chiglintsev 2017: 701–702. For a long time, scholars believed that the text had no parallels in other languages (i.e. it was monolingual), but in 2015 an unpublished Elamite fragment from the University of Chicago Oriental Institute's collection was examined and shown to be related to the same inscription of Xerxes (Green & Stolper 2015: 13).

Tuplin (2010: 294–295) points out that, by analogy with Darius' Canal Stelae, the Greek text might have been lengthier than the Persian, and both the Bosporan inscription and that from the Tearos might have been incised on several stones.

³³ What Herodotus refers to here is probably not just a list of those actually involved in the expedition but a list of all the peoples of the Achaemenid Empire. This is what the historian actually implies in the following phrase: 'he was leading with him all over whom he was ruler'. We should, therefore, expect to see in the texts of both stelae (in addition to the standard praise to Ahura Mazda and the 'royal protocol') a list of the king's subject countries and nations of the sort found in other inscriptions of Darius I (DB I. 14–17; DPe. 10–18; DNa. 22–30; DSe. 21–30; DSm. 6–11) and Xerxes (XPh. 19–28) (Schmitt 1988: 33). On the principle of 'cataloguing the empire' as a reflection of Achaemenid imperial ideology, see Rung 2015: 136–137.

³⁴ It is likely to have been a separately standing altar of the goddess. In Byzantium and its vicinity there were quite a few such structures, as reported by the most valuable and informative source on the historical topography of Byzantium and its environs, the *Voyage through the Bosphorus* by Dionysius of Byzantium (2nd century A.D.?) (8; 16; 24; 28; 46; 71; 74; 86); cf. Hesych. Illustr. Patria Const. BNJ 390 F 3; 14; 16; 37. Taken literally, Herodotus' text implies that the stelae were sawn or broken up after they had been moved to the city, but it cannot be ruled out that this happened in the place where they had been erected (cf. Vasilescu 2007: 119–120 n. 13); that would have had an obvious symbolic meaning and there is a certain analogy in Ctesias' report (cited below).

On the structural peculiarities of ancient Greek altars, see Yavis 1949 – an old, but still frequently referenced work. The plentiful evidence from the Archaic and Classical periods (p. 87–227) indicates that they varied considerably in size and were often assembled from more than one element. We can rest assured that the marble of Darius' stelae would have been sufficient in quantity to construct the altar of Artemis or, at least, some of its parts.

³⁵ This *epiclesis* of Artemis (Orthosia) is explained in the scholia on Pindar (*Ol.* 3. 54a; cf. Ps.-Plut. *De fluv.* 21. 4). It is clearly related to her other and more common epithet of Orthia (see Mejer 2009: 64). It is noteworthy that under this name Artemis was worshipped in Megara, Byzantium's mother city (*SEG* 48, 568 – 4th century B.C.); cf. Asheri, Lloyd & Corcella 2007: 644. The epithet Soteira (Paus. I. 40. 2–3) was also used there (in the context of Xerxes' invasion), so Artemis' function as protector of the city and its walls could also be characteristic of Byzantium (Loukopoulou 1989: 106–108; Russell 2017: 185) – which supports the historicity of Herodotus' report.

one stone, which was left standing by the side of the temple of Dionysus³⁶ in Byzantium, covered over with Assyrian characters³⁷. Now the place on the Bosphorus where Darius made his bridge is, as I conclude, midway between Byzantium and the temple at the mouth of the Pontus³⁸, (hereinafter translated by G.C. Macaulay)³⁹.

This passage is objective and detailed, and there seem to be no grounds to question its reliability, at least in its broad outline – some minor details may, of course, have been reported not quite accurately⁴⁰. Always inquisitive, Herodotus took a keen interest in epigraphic documents – both

³⁶ There is no mention of this temple in other sources. Dionysius' image appears on some coins of Byzantium (Schönert-Geiss 1970: 152). On Dionysian worship in Byzantium in general see Russell 2017: 141; 148–150; 180–181.

³⁷ This proves that there was more than enough marble to build the altar. The author's choice of words gives the impression that it was *on purpose* that this other stone was not used to build the altar: can (a kind of) dedication to a temple be implied here?

³⁸ I.e. at the narrowest part of the strait (Asheri, Lloyd & Corcella 2007: 644–645).

³⁹ Ὁ δὲ Δαρεῖος, ὡς ἐθεήσατο τὸν Πόντον, ἐπλεε ὀπίσω ἐπὶ τὴν γέφυραν, τῆς ἀρχιτέκτων ἐγένετο Μανδροκλῆς Σάμιος. Θεησάμενος δὲ καὶ τὸν Βόσπορον στήλας ἔστησε δύο ἐπ' αὐτοῦ λίθου λευκοῦ, ἐνταμὼν γράμματα ἐς μὲν τὴν Ἀσσύρια, ἐς δὲ τὴν Ἑλληνικά, ἔθνεα πάντα ὅσα περ ἦγε· ἦγε δὲ πάντα τῶν ἦρχε. Τούτων μυριάδες ἐξηριθμήθησαν, χωρὶς τοῦ ναυτικοῦ, ἑβδομήκοντα σὺν ἱππεῦσι, νέες δὲ ἑξακόσται συνελέχθησαν. Τῇσι μὲν νυν στήλῃσι ταύτησι Βυζάντιοι κομίσαντες ἐς τὴν πόλιν ὕστερον τούτων ἐχρήσαντο πρὸς τὸν βωμὸν τῆς Ὁρθωσίης Ἀρτέμιδος, χωρὶς ἐνὸς λίθου οὗτος δὲ κατελείφθη παρὰ τοῦ Διονύσου τὸν νηὸν ἐν Βυζαντίῳ γραμμάτων Ἀσσυρίων πλέος. Τοῦ δὲ Βοσπόρου ὁ χώρος τὸν ἔξευξε βασιλεὺς Δαρεῖος, ὡς ἐμοὶ δοκέειν συμβαλλομένῳ, μέσον ἐστὶ Βυζαντίου τε καὶ τοῦ ἐπὶ στόματι ἱεροῦ.

⁴⁰ *A Commentary on Herodotus* even says that the historian speaks of the Persian structures on the Bosphorus as an eye-witness (How & Welles 1912, vol. 1: 333). So far as the inscriptions are concerned, this would only have been possible if he visited Byzantium and was able to observe e.g. the fragment of one of the slabs by the side of the temple of Dionysos. The author himself, however, makes no direct reference to such a thing. (Harmatta 1954: 11 has no doubt about autopsy, Vasilescu 2007: 120–121 is more critical, and Schmitt 1988: 33 denies it – although with regard to Persian and Greek inscriptions in general, not specifically the fragment in question here). One cannot be confident that the stone remained where the Byzantines had put it, considering the reverses of fortune that fell their city after Darius' Scythian expedition (see below). During his travel to the Black Sea, Herodotus could not have seen the inscriptions on the coast of the strait – they had long gone; as to the other structures of Darius on the European coast, they had, to all appearances, survived to the date of Dionysius of Byzantium (see below). It also seems probable that the historian obtained the information about the bridge over the Bosphorus and all the structures associated with it during his stay on Samos, Mandrocles' motherland (Vasilescu 2007: 120–121).

Greek and Oriental⁴¹ – and it is quite natural that he should have paid attention to Darius' inscriptions on the Bosphorus⁴².

Moreover, the information he provides is by no means unique: there are comparable reports in other ancient writers. The first of them comes from Ctesias of Cnidus (*FGrHist* 688 F 13. 21)⁴³:

Darius assembled an army of 800,000 men and built bridges over the Bosphorus and the Istros. He crossed into Scythia and marched for 15 days. The two sides sent bows each other and the Scythian bow was stronger⁴⁴. As a result, Darius took flight and crossed the bridges and, in his haste, set them adrift before the whole army had crossed. Those men left behind in Europe were killed by Scytharbes, 80,000⁴⁵ in all. When Darius had crossed the bridge, he razed the homes and temples of the Chalchedonians to the ground because they had planned to set the bridges near them adrift and because they had

⁴¹ In addition to the work by Schmitt (1988) referenced above, see West 1985, a substantial article with a list of the epigraphic documents mentioned by Herodotus.

⁴² See particularly West 1985: 281–282.

⁴³ Although Ctesias was Herodotus' consistent 'opponent' both in general and on many issues of Achaemenid history in particular, and continually polemicized against him (see, for instance, Lenfant 1996; Bichler 2004), in this case there is little or no conflict between the two authors' evidence: Herodotus and Ctesias complement each other by reporting different details of the same events that took place in Europe as well as Asia. The reason is their use of different sources: Ctesias lived at the Achaemenid court for a long time and was therefore able to obtain information about Darius' personal participation in the expedition against Chalcedon. Herodotean evidence sometimes seems damaging to Ctesias' credibility, but this does not preclude the latter actually being right in certain instances (Gillis 1979: 13). We can hardly accept the view that both Greek authors speak *of one and the same fact*, and that Herodotus' version is more credible than that in Ctesias because he (allegedly) writes as an eye-witness (How & Welles 1912, vol. 1: 333). On that basis, one might conclude that Darius' stelae were indeed dismantled by the Byzantines, whereas the report that the Chalcedonians destroyed the altar of Zeus Diabaterios is nothing but a fabrication by Ctesias (cf. Balcer 1972: 121). Nonetheless, as is shown below, it is impossible to accept such a view.

⁴⁴ At this point Llewellyn-Jones and Robson have 'The two sides fired arrows at each other and the Scythians prevailed'; cf. A. Nichols' translation: 'The two sides exchanged volleys of arrows and the Scythians were victorious'. These translations, however, are quite incorrect because Ctesias is clearly speaking about an exchange of bows between the Persians and the Scythians – a novelistic motif similar to that present in Herodotus' story about the Scythian king's 'gifts' to Darius (4. 131–132). Cf. the tale of the same kind on the bow sent to Cambyses by the Ethiopian king (3. 21–22).

⁴⁵ The same number is reported by Herodotus (4. 143) – which does not make it more reliable.

destroyed the altar which Darius had dedicated on his way through in the name of Zeus Diabatērios⁴⁶ (translated by L. Llewellyn-Jones and J. Robson with authors' correction)⁴⁷.

The order in which Ctesias mentions the Chalcedonians' crimes against Darius is probably not chronological but reflects their relative gravity. Later on, Ctesias rather strangely claims that they served as a pretext for Xerxes' invasion of Greece (*FGrHist* 688 F 13. 25), but this is a clear misrepresentation.

The other source of information parallel to that in Herodotus comes from two passages in the *Voyage through the Bosphorus* by Dionysius of Byzantium (see above n. 33)⁴⁸.

Describing the European coast of the Bosphorus, Dionysius writes in the following terms:

After the temple of Artemis Diktynna⁴⁹ ... the sailing is rough and strongly affected by the powerful current. The area, however, is called Pyrrhias Kyon (Pyrrhias Dog)... This is also the site of the most northerly crossing of the strait, dividing the two continents. Darius is said to have made his crossing here; for it was from here

⁴⁶ Zeus as the 'Patron of Crossing'. Ctesias probably hellenizes the Iranian Ahura Mazda (Nichols 2008: 171 – with references). One of the most important symbols of (later) Zoroastrian mythology is the Chinvat/Chinvar Bridge leading to the world of the dead (Pahlavi: *čīnwad*; Pazend: *čīn.var*; Avestan: *čīnvant-*, Adj. 'separating', *čīnvatō* in combination with the noun 'bridge, passage' [Avestan: *paretav-*, m.]); when crossing this bridge, the souls of the righteous are assisted by the divinities Sraosha, Vohu Manah and Bahram (Chunakova 2004: 256–257). An allusion to these ideas might have been intended when Darius' bridge was constructed.

⁴⁷ στράτευμα δὲ ἀγείρας Δαρείος π μυριάδας, καὶ ζεύξας τὸν Βόσπορον καὶ τὸν Ἰστρον, διέβη ἐπὶ Σκύθας, ὁδὸν ἐλάσας ἡμερῶν ιε. καὶ ἀντέπεμπον ἀλλήλοις τόξα· ἐπικρατέστερα δ' ἦν τῶν Σκυθῶν· διὸ καὶ φεύγων Δαρείος διέβη τὰς γεφυρώσεις, καὶ ἔλυσσε σπεύδων πρὶν ἢ τὸ ὅλον διαβῆναι στράτευμα· καὶ ἀπέθανον ὑπὸ Σκυθάρβειο οἱ καταλειφθέντες ἐν τῇ Εὐρώπῃ μυριάδες ὀκτώ. Δαρείος δὲ τὴν γέφυραν διαβάς, Χαλκηδονίων οἰκίας καὶ ἱερὰ ἐνέπρησεν, ἐπεὶ τὰς πρὸς αὐτοῖς γεφύρας ἐμελέτησαν λῦσαι, καὶ ὅτι τὸν βωμόν, ὃν περὶ Δαρείος κατέθετο ἐπ' ὀνόματι Διαβατηρίου Διός, ἠφάνισαν.

⁴⁸ Unlike Ctesias, Dionysius has been virtually overlooked in discussion of Herodotus' evidence about Darius; and more generally, he has been undeservedly (half-)forgotten by modern historiography.

⁴⁹ A well-known *epiclesis* of Artemis (here called Diana, because *Voyage* 57–95 is preserved only in a Latin translation) that means 'Catching with a net'.

that Androcles⁵⁰ the Samian put together a bridge in the Bosphorus⁵¹. This place offers among other monuments of history a chair cut in the rock⁵² where they say Darius sat to watch the bridge and his army's crossing' (hereinafter translated by the authors) (57)⁵³.

Earlier in the work, when Dionysius is describing the sights of the southern shore of the Golden Horn, in the immediate vicinity of Byzantium itself but outside the city walls, we find another useful bit of information:

By a landing-place on the sea there are two temples, of Hera and Plouton; nothing remains of them but their names. The former was burned by the Persians who were with Darius during the campaign

⁵⁰ This must be Dionysius' or a scribe's mistake. There are no grounds to doubt that the name Mandrocles is correctly reported by Herodotus and other authors (Theocr. *Anth. Gr.* 6. 341; Tzetz. *Chil.* 1. 826); see Belfiore 2009: 310, n. 138.

⁵¹ Cf. Polyb. 4. 43. 2: '... just at the narrowest point of the whole channel, where Darius is said to have made his bridge of ships across the strait, when he crossed to invade Scythia' (translated by E.S. Shuckburgh).

⁵² Herodotus also tells us about Darius' throne, although in a somewhat different context: 'After this Dareios being pleased with the floating bridge rewarded the chief constructor of it, Mandrocles the Samian, with gifts tenfold; and as an offering from these Mandrocles had a painting made to present the whole scene of the bridge over the Bosphorus and king Dareios sitting in a prominent seat and his army crossing over' (4. 88). As far as we know, thrones cut in a rock were not characteristic of Persian architecture, but they were wide-spread in Asia Minor, especially among the Phrygians. See e.g. Berndt-Ersöz 2006 who mentions them many times; of particular note is p. 171 n. 228 (examples of similar objects in the Hellenistic world) and p. 196 (general concept of 'divine rock-cut thrones'). See also Vassileva 2009. These details are important on account of the above-mentioned probability of Greek (and, it seems, not only Greek) influence on the manner of making the inscription itself. Darius' example was evidently followed by Xerxes who build a stone throne at the bridge over Hellespont: 'When Xerxes had come into the midst of Abydos, he had a desire to see all the army; and there had been made purposely for him beforehand upon a hill in this place a raised seat of white stone (προεξέδρη λίθου λευκοῦ), which the people of Abydos had built at the command of the king given beforehand. There he took his seat, and looking down upon the shore he gazed both upon the land-army and the ship' (Hdt. 7. 44). In this case the throne and the observation point were on the Asian side of the strait, evidently because it was more convenient due the landscape's peculiarities.

⁵³ Post ... Dianae Dictynnae aedem turbulenta est et vehementer contento fluxu comota navigatio; locus autem dicitur Pyrrhias Cyon ... ibi quoque meatus freti arctissimus, dirimens duas continentes; ibidem etiam dicitur fuisse Darius transitus; hinc enim Androcles Samius pontem iunxit in Bosporo, hic locus cum alia praebet historiae monumenta, tum sellam in petra excisam; in hac enim aiunt sedentem Darium spectatorem fuisse pontis et transeuntis exercitus.

against the Scythians, avenging the king for the crimes he accused the city of committing...'⁵⁴ (14).

Darius' bridge was clearly located at the narrowest point of the strait (where its width is only 700 metres) between Rumelihisarı and Anadoluhisarı (Pl. 2). This is where the Fatih Sultan Mehmet Bridge was constructed in 1985–1988 (the second of the three modern bridges linking the European and Asian shores of the Bosphorus). Both shores in the vicinity are still rather lofty and picturesque (Pl. 3), and this created an excellent setting in which to erect the sort of monumental architectural structures that would satisfy a Persian ruler's taste and self-esteem⁵⁵. There is little doubt that Darius wished (a) to mark his crossing of an important geographical divide by putting up a symbol of his control of the Bosphorus⁵⁶ to be viewed by his subjects, his enemies, and the whole world and (b) to affirm his status as ruler not only of Asia, but also (now) of Europe⁵⁷. Of course, such an action would have been regarded by Greeks as a display of ὕβρις⁵⁸. The fact that the altar of Zeus was destroyed by the Chalcedonians strongly suggests that it stood on the Asian side of the strait. By a similar reasoning the inscriptions that the Byzantines conveyed to their city would have been in Europe⁵⁹.

⁵⁴ Κατὰ δ' ἀπόβασιν τῆς θαλάττης δύο νεφ, "Ἡρας καὶ Πλούτωνος·λείπεται δ' αὐτῶν οὐδέν, ὅτι μὴ τοῦνομα· τὸν μὲν γὰρ οἱ σὺν Δαρείῳ Περσῶν κατὰ τὴν ἐπὶ Σκύθας ἔλασιν ἐνέπρησαν, τῷ βασιλεῖ τιμωροῦντες ἀνθ' ὃν ἡτιᾶτο τὴν πόλιν.

⁵⁵ Compare the impression we get from Strabo of the Persians' tastes in the use of landscape for their structures: 'Above Sardeis is situated Mt. Tmolus, a blest mountain, with a look-out on its summit, an arcade of white marble, a work of the Persians, whence there is a view of the plains below all round, particularly the Caÿster Plain' (Strabo. 13. 4. 5; translated by H.L. Jones).

⁵⁶ On the strategic importance of straits for the Persians, see Stronk 1998–1999, although the focus is on the Hellespont rather than Bosphorus.

⁵⁷ Briant 2002: 198; Bichler & Rollinger 2017: 9.

⁵⁸ Rollinger 2013: 73. In a detailed article, A. Dan for some reason does not mention Darius' crossing of the Bosphorus among other crossings of symbolic natural boundaries: Cyrus at the Araxes, Croesus at the Halys, Darius at the Istros (during the same Scythian campaign), Xerxes at the Strymon. The most detailed treatment is that of Xerxes' crossing of the Hellespont (Dan 2015). Much of Dan's analysis, however, certainly applies to the episode under discussion here. Cf. the opinions expressed by Artabanos, Darius' brother, about the ill effects of marching against the Scythians in general (Hdt. 4. 83) and of building bridges over the Bosphorus and the Istros in particular (7. 10 – remarks addressed to Xerxes).

⁵⁹ Of course, in principle, there was nothing to prevent the Byzantines from sailing to and acting on the Asian side, and the Chalcedonians on the European shore; cf. Vasilescu 2007: 119 n. 11.

Historical Context

So far, we have proposed a restoration of the text on the Phanagoreia fragment and laid out the material in Greek sources that seems likely to be relevant to the monument to which that fragment originally belonged. We now need to consider in more detail (1) the events surrounding the creation of the inscription and (2) the circumstances in which (part of) it ended up in Phanagoreia. A discussion of these questions should also shed more light on various aspects of Darius' Scythian expedition and Greco-Persian relations at that time. It must be stressed that the issues raised by these extremely interesting events are numerous and diverse, and the amount of published research discussing them is truly enormous. We shall therefore be selective in choosing topics for discussion and in our citation of the modern bibliography. More specifically, we are going to discuss (a) the crossing of large bodies of water by Persian troops, viewed from politico-military, religious-ideological and (partly) engineering perspectives, (b) the position of the Greeks in the area of the Black Sea straits (primarily the Byzantines and the Chalcedonians) during the Scythian campaign, and (c) the final stage of the expedition, in particular Darius' return to Asia.

The reasons that caused the King of Kings to launch a Scythian expedition in ca. 513 B.C. are of little importance in the present context⁶⁰. More important is the fact that right from the outset the campaign was bound to have a direct effect on Byzantium and Chalcedon, standing as they did on the two sides of the Thracian Bosphorus. We have virtually no information about the relations of those *poleis* with Darius before the start of the expedition: it appears that they submitted to the Persians (more or less) voluntarily⁶¹, and evidently did not find the rule of the King of Kings too burdensome at first⁶². When listing Greek leaders who were 'men of

⁶⁰ For a review of the historiography see Vasilev 2015: 41–45. Kuznetsov's idea that the king wished to include excellent Scythian warriors in his army (Kuznetsov 2018: 164) also seems quite probable.

⁶¹ Vasilev 2015: 56–58. The author rightly stresses the absence of a Persian garrison in Byzantium.

⁶² Grounds for this belief are provided by Herodotus' account of the stay of Megabazos, Darius' favourite, in Byzantium (4. 144), an account that in no way suggests that there had previously been a war between the Persians and the Byzantines and that the city had been captured. The context of the narrative precludes the view of L.A. Pal'tseva (Pal'tseva 1999: 166) that Megabazos visited the city after Darius left him in Thrace with 80,000

consequence in the eyes of the king' (ἐόντες λόγου πρὸς βασιλέος) and who discussed destroying the Istros bridge, Herodotus mentions the tyrant Ariston of Byzantium⁶³ (4. 138), and it cannot be ruled out that he had come to power thanks to Darius' support⁶⁴. It seems likely that the King took advantage of local knowledge of the currents and the shoreline of the strait when selecting a place for Mandrocles' bridge and that he exploited the human and material resources of Byzantium and Chalcedon for the actual building of the bridge (cf. Hdt. 4. 83)⁶⁵. The erection of such a grand structure⁶⁶ must have been a high-profile event, and this is indeed attested

troops (cf. Ctes. *FGrHist* 688 F 13. 21), after the king himself had returned to Asia (Hdt. 4. 143–144): at that time the Byzantines were already rebels and enemies of the Great King, but the Persians under Megabazos failed to punish and capture the city (see below). So, the visit evidently took place some time earlier, before the Scythian campaign, when Byzantium was still loyal to the Persians. For the problem see Merle 1916: 12 n. 6. Vasilev 2015: 85 excludes the possibility of Megabazos' presence in the city before the Scythian campaign on the assumption that Megabazos and Otanes acted jointly in Thrace after Darius' crossing to Asia, but his logic here is not completely clear.

⁶³ Unfortunately, this is the only reference to him. The name recurs in later Byzantine epigraphic materials: IvByz 32; 155.

⁶⁴ H. Merle (1916: 11) states without reservation that Ariston was appointed by the Persians; cf. Nevskaya 1953: 60; Vasilev 2015: 54–55 (with more details). A contrary opinion (without arguments) is expressed by Isaac 1986: 223. D. Engster, for some reason, mentions Ariston only in the context of later events, when Byzantium was taken by Otanes after the Scythian expedition (Engster 2014: 369). See also Loukopoulou 1989: 86 and n. 6: she does not rule out the possibility that both Byzantium and Chalcedon were under Ariston's rule, because the two cities seem to have broken from the Persians simultaneously (freed of the tyrant's control?). This is possible, but both *poleis* were independent political units at the time.

⁶⁵ Merle 1916: 11.

⁶⁶ See the description provided by Jordanes: 'Crossing on boats covered with boards and joined like a bridge almost the whole way from Chalcedon to Byzantium, he started for Thrace and Moesia. Later he built a bridge over the Danube in like manner...' (Get. 63; translated by C.C. Mierow). It was a pontoon bridge and evidently made in the same way as Darius' bridge over the Istros (Hdt. 4. 89; 139) and Xerxes' over the Hellespont (7. 36, with detailed description). On the design of Xerxes' bridge, see Hammond & Roseman 1996; Stronk 1998–1999: 58–65. Similar bridges had already been built for Cyrus during the war against the Massagetae (1. 205) and for Darius during his expedition against the same people. For details, see Chernenko 1984: 58; 61–63; Fol and Hammond 2008: 238. The word *draxtā* ('by means of wood/tree' – DB V. 24: [d]-r-x-[t]-a; Middle Persian *draxt*; New Persian *diraxt* – 'wood') in the Behistun Inscription's text about Darius' crossing over the 'sea' (*draya*) in his expedition against the Saka Tigraxauda in 519 B.C. probably had the metaphoric meaning of a *bridge*, although there is no scholarly consensus on interpreting this part of the text. For a long time, researchers chose to leave it without translation as some lines were partly destroyed and others poorly legible (King & Thompson 1907: 81–82; Turaev 1911: 277). V.I. Abaev, who originally accepted the translation and

by Mandrocles' dedication of a painting with poetic inscription in the temple of Hera at Samos (4. 88) as well as by Choerilus of Samos's *The Crossing of the Pontoon-Bridge* (ἐν τῇ διαβάσει τῆς σχεδίας ἣν ἔξευξε Δαρεῖος), a poem mentioned by Strabo (7. 3. 9) citing Ephorus⁶⁷. 'The crossing of the host from Asia to Europe was a moment of religious significance; for the waters which divided the two continents were sacred – those of the Tanais (Don), the Black Sea, the Bosphorus and the Hellespont'⁶⁸. To mark the event, commemorative monuments were erected on Darius' orders: on the Asian side there was (at least) an altar, attributed by Ctesias to Zeus Diabaterios (= Ahura Mazda or some other Iranian deity?); on the European side there were stelae listing the subjects who were involved in the King of Kings' expedition (and very probably all the peoples of his empire: above n. 33), a throne from which he could conveniently observe the troops' crossing, and some other structures. The inscription on the European shore may have mentioned the construction of the bridge over the strait as well as the aim of the expedition, which was to punish the Scythian king.

It is very likely that the next crossing – over the Istros – was also presented by Darius as an important symbolic event. This conjecture can be supported by a fresh look at a source that has already been known for a long time. In 1954, J. Harmatta published a fragmentary inscription in Old Persian (DG), written on a small clay tablet (47 mm in height, 52 mm in width, 5–6 mm in thickness). It had been discovered accidentally in an unclear archaeological context in the Romanian city of Gherla (Transylvania)

interpretation proposed by V.V. Struve (Struve 1946: 231), believed that it spoke of a 'ship bridge' (Abaev 1950: 263); later, however, he changed his mind in favour of 'rafts' (Abaev 1980: 31). M.A. Dandamaev assumed that Darius and his army had done the crossing 'by ferry' (sic!) (Dandamaev 2002: 397). Kent wrote of a crossing 'by raft' (Kent 1953: 134), and Schmitt translates *draxtā* 'by means of a tree-trunk' (Schmitt 1991: 76 and n. 24) and 'auf Baumstämmen' (Schmitt 2009: 90), and assumes that the text is talking about 'wooden rafts' (Holzflößen) (Schmitt 2009: 90). On Achaemenid bridges in general, see <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bridges> (analysis of terminology and archaeological evidence).

⁶⁷ E.V. Chernenko apparently believes that Choerilus described the bridge over the Istros (Chernenko 1984: 62); but, being Mandrocles' compatriot, the poet would surely have chosen the Bosphorus bridge as a subject for his work (cf. Fol & Hammond 2008: 238); and, contrary to B.A. Rybakov's opinion (Rybakov 1979: 29, 70, 79), there are no grounds for assuming that Mandrocles was involved in the construction of the Istros bridge (Chernenko 1984: 62).

⁶⁸ Fol & Hammond 2008: 238.

back in 1937. Harmatta restored the text as follows: ‘Darius the Great King, King of Kings, King of countries, son of Hystaspes, an Achaemenid, the one who built this palace’⁶⁹. The word *tacaram* (‘palace’) was proposed on the grounds that the text contains the verb [a]*kunauš* (‘he built’) in its third-person singular imperfect form and that the combination of *akunauš* and *tacaram* occurs in another building inscription of Darius I from Persepolis (DPa). (See above for the possible use of the same verb in a different form in Line 5 of the Phanagoreia inscription). Harmatta suggested several different ways in which the tablet might have found its way to Gherla. He did not rule out a connection with the Scythian expedition of Darius I, but he did not rate the hypothesis as very likely. As to the purpose of the document, he made the quite reasonable suggestion that it served as a first draft for the stonemasons who were going to copy the text onto stone⁷⁰. However, the likelihood of the Persians having built a palace in the Balkans⁷¹ is fairly low⁷², and it is equally implausible that the tablet related to an inscribed structure somewhere in the depths of Asia but somehow found its way to Europe hundreds or thousands kilometres far away. This is probably why P. Lecoq (who also accepted that the tablet was a draft to be copied onto stone) associated it with the inscription that Darius erected on the shores of the Bosporus. Concomitantly Lecoq cites the text without the restoration of *tacaram* proposed by Harmatta⁷³. Schmitt also does not feel bound to accept *tacaram*. In his view, the Gherla inscription

⁶⁹ Harmatta 1954: 7. Due to the obviously singular character of the discovery, Harmatta himself offered a rather detailed discussion of the possibility of forgery and ruled it out (Harmatta 1954: 13–14). In his monograph on *pseudo-altpersische Inschriften*, Schmitt, a leading expert on Achaemenid epigraphy, expresses the view that there are no indications that the inscription was forged (‘aber es spricht vorderhand im Falle von DGa nichts für eine Fälschung oder dafür, daß das Fragment nicht authentisch ist’) (Schmitt 2007: 63).

⁷⁰ Harmatta 1954: 7–11.

⁷¹ This suggestion is, however, sometimes made: see e.g. Rahe 2015: 88. In recent decades, quite impressive remains of Persian palace architecture have been found in Transcaucasia (see the thorough survey by Knauß, Gagošidse & Babaev 2013), but Achaemenid rule in that region was far more lasting and stable than that in Thrace. On probable archaeological evidence for the Persian presence there, see Chernenko 1984: 58–62; Tuplin 2010: 294; Vasilev 2015: 122–123 (diplomatic gifts for independent Thracian rulers?), Avram 2017 (the destruction of Istria).

⁷² The same applies to Z. Archibald’s suggestion that the inscription contained information about the construction of fortifications on the west coast of the Black Sea (Archibald 1998: 81): it is unlikely that Darius would have spent time and resources on solving issues that were not directly related to his war against the Scythians (Avram 2017: 10–11 n. 41).

⁷³ Lecoq 1997: 128, 218.

can be linked to Darius' Scythian expedition and relates either to the king's *stelae* marking the building the Bosphorus bridge or to the inscription at the source of the River Tearos⁷⁴, but, having reached this point, it is logical to pose another question: could the Gherla text have been about the construction of a bridge over the Istros? In view of the symbolic significance of the river as one of the sacred borders of the Achaemenid Empire (Plut. *Alex.* 36, citing Deinon of Colophon)⁷⁵, it seems reasonable to assume that the construction of a large bridge across it and its subsequent use by the army were also reflected in some way in the king's propaganda, all the more so because similar events (albeit rather vaguely described) may have been mentioned elsewhere in Darius' inscriptions (unfortunately, it remains unclear what word or phrase was used there). Perhaps an inscription about the construction of the bridge was erected somewhere on the bank of the Istros⁷⁶, but for some reason Herodotus knew nothing about it. As to the clay tablet (the inscription's first draft) it obviously remains unclear precisely how it found its way to Transylvania, north of the Danube⁷⁷. Nevertheless, the likelihood of its making such a journey seems much greater than in the other versions, when the starting point would have been very much further away.

After the arrival of the Persian army in Europe, the Greeks of the Thracian Bosphorus were apparently largely left to their own devices. As is well known, the Scythian campaign turned out quite badly, and the Byzantines, Chalcedonians and other Greeks were hardly unaware of the disastrous

⁷⁴ Schmitt 2007: 63.

⁷⁵ On Achaemenid imperial geographical borders, see Rung 2015: 133–136 (esp. 135). Dan 2011 is a substantial article about the Istros as a natural/geographical as well as mental border as viewed by Greeks.

⁷⁶ On bridging the Istros, see Herod. 4. 89; Chernenko 1984: 61–62. Strabo provides an additional detail, that the crossing ran *via* the island of Peuce (7. 3. 15). This helps us to understand how, by dismantling only that part of the bridge that was the closest to the north bank, the Greeks later managed to deceive the Scythians who were demanding that the whole bridge should be destroyed (Hdt. 4. 139): clearly, the Scythians could not see what was happening on the opposite side of the island. Scholars sometimes stress the contradictions between Herodotus' and Strabo's data (Vasilev 2015: 67–68; Avram 2017: 8), but they do not seem to us to be significant.

⁷⁷ In the area of the Poiana Ruscă and the Apuseni mountain ranges in western Romania there are deposits of high-quality marble, whence a stone might hypothetically have been delivered on Darius' orders for making an inscription by the Danube. According to some researchers, the deposits were first mined in ancient times, see Tudor & Surd 2015: 102 (with references).

situation into which Darius' army had got itself in Europe: Greek ships were actively used by the king (Hdt. 4. 83; 85; 87; 89; 97–98; 141), and, if we assume that they were able to sail to the Thracian Bosphorus and the Propontis while the expedition was going on⁷⁸, their crews were well placed to spread the word about the state of matters. This is very probably the situation in which Darius' structures were torn down on both sides of the strait. In taking such action the Byzantines and the Chalcedonians were pursuing an obvious political and propagandistic goal: to destroy the symbols of Persian rule over the strait and their cities and to undermine the authority of the Persian king. In the case of the Byzantines, it also seems legitimate to assume that the political regime was changed: there is no certainty that the tyrant Ariston, who had joined Darius' expedition, was able to return to the city⁷⁹. The Greek cities on the Propontis also presumably intended to free themselves from Persian rule (Strabo. 13. 1. 22).

It is likely that the final phase of the return of Darius' troops from Europe was accompanied by considerable problems. According to Ctesias, the citizens of Chalcedon tried to make things difficult for the (severely depleted) Persian army by destroying the Bosphorus bridge. No doubt they hoped to make themselves safe from the barbarians. They must have been guided by the same reasons as the Greek leaders who (incited by the Scythians) mooted the idea of destroying the Istros bridge (Hdt. 4. 136–141) – a move that would have led to the total annihilation of the Persian army⁸⁰. Given the logic of the situation, the Chalcedonians must have come up with a plan to destroy Mandrocles' bridge *after* it was known that Darius had re-crossed the Istros and was back in Thrace. At that stage (with the Persians approaching Asia) inflicting a real defeat on their army will hardly have been on the agenda, but removing the bridge would have caused them

⁷⁸ In the description of Xerxes' Hellespont bridge (Hdt. 7. 36), special note is made that 'between the anchored penteconters and triremes, they (the Persians – *authors' note*) left an opening for a passage through, so that any who wished might be able to sail into the Pontus with small vessels, and also from the Pontus outwards'. Darius' bridge was presumably laid out in the same way.

⁷⁹ In fairness, it should be noted that, of the ten tyrants who discussed the destruction of the Istros bridge, only three (all from Ionia: Histiaios of Miletos, Aiakes of Samos and Strattis of Chios) are mentioned by Herodotus more than once.

⁸⁰ On this episode and its interpretation in modern historiography, see Gillis 1979: 8–13; Graf 1985: 82; Rung 2008: 98; Lapteva 2017: 132.

serious inconvenience⁸¹. Since Ctesias only speaks of them intending to set the bridges adrift, something evidently prevented them from actually doing so. Perhaps not all Chalcedonians agreed that it was a good idea or perhaps they simply lacked the resources and hardware required to carry out ‘disassembly’ on such a large scale⁸². In any case, the bridge remained intact and, according to Ctesias, Darius crossed it.

The view has, of course, sometimes been expressed that Ctesias is wrong and that the Chalcedonians *did* manage to destroy the bridge while the Persians were still in Scythia⁸³. An argument for this view might start from the fact that in Herodotus’ account the king by-passed Byzantium, marched to the Thracian Chersonese and crossed from Sestos to Asia by ship (4. 143): perhaps the reason for his doing so was that the Bosphorus bridge had been destroyed.

But there are no good grounds for this view. It is not necessary to suppose that it was because Mandrocles’ bridge had been destroyed that Darius reached Asia across the Hellespont rather than the Bosphorus⁸⁴. Darius might have been led to go *via* the Hellespont by other quite rational strategic reasons – by information that Byzantium and Chalcedon had

⁸¹ Herodotus seems to date the Scythian invasion of Thrace (Hdt. 6. 40; cf. Strabo. 12. 1. 22) to a somewhat later period; but some believe that it happened immediately after the Persians’ retreat (Alexandrescu 1956: 18; Chernenko 1984: 106–110; Gardiner-Garden 1987: 338–340; cf. the newest work: Vasilev 2015: 68–71, with earlier literature). In this connection, it is pertinent to wonder whether it might have been Darius who destroyed the Istros bridge. This is a subject on which Herodotus is silent and Ctesias rather vague. Such an action would, of course, have prevented the Scythians from pursuing the enemy into Thrace. That the Persians led by Megabazos experienced certain difficulties (entirely unmentioned in Herodotus) may be implied by Ctesias’ report that the Scythian king Skytharbes executed the 80,000 Persians left by Darius in Europe (*FGrHist* 688 F 13. 21), though the report is on the whole doubtless unreliable.

⁸² At the same time, they could hardly count on the Byzantines’ assistance: it was not to the latter’s advantage to do anything that would keep Persian troops in Europe and in the immediate vicinity of Byzantium. Moreover, if guards were left to watch the Istros bridge as Herodotus implies (4. 97: Coës the Mytilenian’s speech), it seems logical to assume that Darius made similar arrangements at the Bosphorus (Loukopoulou 1989: 86), and these guards stood in the way of the Chalcedonians’ plan.

⁸³ Merle 1916: 11 Anm. 6; Nevskaya 1953: 61; Chernenko 1984: 106. Surprisingly, Nichols (Nichols 2008: 31) also supports this version, despite the fact that he gives an accurate translation of the crucial passage, pointing to no more than the Chalcedonians’ *intention* (p. 93). Llewellyn-Jones & Robson (2010) also translate it correctly: ‘they (the Chalcedonians. – *Auth.*) had planned to set the bridges near them adrift’ (p. 181).

⁸⁴ Among the above-mentioned authors, only Nevskaya provides this explanation (Nevskaya 1953: 61).

rebelled (perhaps backed up by *rumours* of an actual or intended destruction of the Bosphorus bridge) and by the possibility of getting help from Miltiades, the tyrant of the Thracian Chersonese⁸⁵. Moreover, it made sense for him to punish the coastal *poleis* of the Propontis that were intending to defect (of which only Abydos is specifically named by Strabo. 13. 1. 22⁸⁶) and then make for a base in Asia from which he could raise additional troops and carry out an efficient operation against the Byzantine and Chalcedonian rebels: that would have been impossible if he had crossed the Bosphorus into the territory of Chalcedon, for Chalcedon was on the edge of Bithynia, a region that had probably not been completely subdued by the Persians⁸⁷. Herodotus records that Darius stayed in Sardis (5. 12), and it was presumably from there that the expedition against Chalcedon was launched. Ctesias' account is inconsistent with Herodotus inasmuch as he makes Darius cross the Bosphorus bridge, but in other respects he simply abridges the story⁸⁸: Darius did capture and destroy Chalcedon, but this happened later, not at the point at which he first crossed back into Asia⁸⁹. That Darius led the expedition himself is, incidentally, something attested not only by Ctesias but also by Polyaeus (7. 11. 5)⁹⁰.

Thus, the Chalcedonians who had dared to oppose the king were severely punished, and Darius' prestige was partly restored. As to Byzantium, its time was yet to come. It is important to note that Dionysius (14) does not

⁸⁵ Cf. Gardiner-Garden 1987: 341; Asheri, Lloyd & Corcella 2007: 668–669; Tuplin 2010: 282–283.

⁸⁶ It is perhaps not accidental that it is precisely this city, which was also the point of crossing from Europe to Asia, that is mentioned as rebellious.

⁸⁷ On the position of Bithynia in Darius' empire, see Gabelko 2005: 94–96.

⁸⁸ It can hardly be the case that Ctesias' narrative has no value whatsoever (Alexandrescu 1956: 17–18; cf. Vasilev 2015: 71–72). For a more balanced approach, see Gardiner-Garden 1987: 338; Tuplin 2010: 282.

⁸⁹ It was also later that Darius tore down Mandrocles' bridge (*FGrHist* 688 F 13. 21) which had performed its function and was now obstructing normal passage from the Pontus to the Propontis. And, contrary to Ctesias' report, Darius did not have to do it in a rush at that point. Thus, the Cnidian author is wrong only in one thing: the King of Kings did not return from Europe to Asia along the bridge constructed by Mandroclus.

⁹⁰ The siege was difficult, as the Chalcedonians took cover behind strong city walls and had a sufficient store of provisions, but the Persians managed to take possession of the city by digging a mine under it. J. Balcer dates the capture of Chalcedon by Darius to the time right after the Scythian campaign (Balcer 1972: 126, 129), but it remains not quite clear whether those events should be distinguished from the capture of the city by Otanes (Hdt. 5. 26). More definitely: Tuplin 2010: 282.

say that it was the king himself who had the temple of Hera burnt⁹¹, whereas Ctesias and Polyaeus do attribute the capture and destruction of Chalcedon to Darius personally. It is likely that the first punitive action against the Byzantines was undertaken by some part of the Persian army that Darius left in Thrace under the command of Megabazos (4. 143–144; 5. 1–2), and that it was quite a small-scale affair. As reported by Dionysius, the Persians confined themselves to destroying the temple of Hera which stood outside Byzantium's city walls⁹². It may well be that, at the outset, they were not in a position to attack the city's robust fortifications⁹³, either because they did not have the appropriate resources to hand or because there were other more pressing strategic goals⁹⁴. Herodotus' rather vague report

⁹¹ Which was omitted by Russell 2017: 4 n. 10.

⁹² Obviously, the choice of target was determined by its accessibility. The temple of Diana Diktyinna also mentioned by Dionysius and located in the vicinity of the bridge had probably not been built by the time of the events under discussion here, nor the Hermaeum on a promontory on the European side that was mentioned by Polybius in his description of the Thracian Bosphorus (4. 43. 2; 4). As for the temple of Dionysus, mentioned in connection with the destruction of Darius' stelae, it was inside the city and inaccessible to the Persians. We cannot accept Nevskaya's association of the destruction of the temple of Hera with the devastation of Byzantium caused by the Phoenicians after the suppression of the Ionian revolt (Nevskaya 1953: 64): Dionysius is quite accurate here as regards the details. In her commentary on *The Voyage through the Bosphorus*, S. Belfiore provides no explanation of the historical context of the destruction of the Heraion (Belfiore 2009: 300 n. 55). The obscurity (even evasiveness) of Dionysius' reference to Darius' accusation against the Byzantines may be explained by the fact that, when speaking of things that had an adverse effect on his native *polis*, he is often allusive or resorts to omissions (for instance, see 47; possibly, also 103 and 105). The situation in this case was quite awkward: not only was the destruction of the temple a bad thing in itself, but it may be that the damage the Byzantines had done to Darius' royal authority entitled him to take revenge.

⁹³ On Byzantium's walls, see Engster 2014: 392–393. Evidently, the city's fortifications were already strong, and this casts doubt on the view that (at least) the Thracian Wall (Dion. Byz. 6), which protected the city from the hinterland, was built by the Spartan Pausanias during his occupation of the city in 470's B.C. (Belfiore 2009: 296 n. 37). In the face of a constant threat from the Thracians (Dion. Byz. 8; 16; 53; cf. Polyb. 4. 45) the citizens of Byzantium should have taken seriously care of the construction of fortifications, probably immediately after the founding of *apoikia*. Hesychius of Miletus connects the building of the walls with the activities of the mythical first king of the city and its eponym Byzas and indicates that they were built by Apollo and Poseidon (Hesych. Illustr. Patria Const. *BNJ* 390. F 12 14).

⁹⁴ M. Vasilev writes as follows: 'Dionysius does not quote his source, but it appears that he uses Herodotus (V.26.1–28.1), or an author who follows him (?! – *Auth.*), for at least a part of the information he provides (with the exception of the detail about the temple of Hera). If Herodotus is the ultimate source, this means that Dionysius' information

(4. 144) that Megabazos, who had been left in command in the land of the Hellespontians⁹⁵, conquered all the cities that did not support the Persian cause (στρατηγὸς λειφθεὶς ἐν τῇ χώρῃ Ἑλλησποντίων τοὺς μὴ μηδίζοντας κατεστρέφετο) provides no solid ground for including Byzantium among those *poleis*: after taking possession of Perinthos, Megabazos' troops probably headed west (5. 1–2)⁹⁶.

Byzantium was properly dealt with later in ca 510 B.C., when, together with long-suffering Chalcedon⁹⁷, it was conquered by Otanes, Megabazos' successor as commander of the army in Europe (5. 26). If the Byzantines were among those whom Otanes accused of damaging Darius' army on its return from Scythia (5. 27), his capture of the city may count as its punishment for the harm to royal prestige caused by the destruction of the Bosporus stelae⁹⁸. Otanes' conquests stretched as far as Antandros and Lamponion (in Asia) and also included the islands Lemnos and Imbros, and this indicates that (unlike Megabazos, it seems) he had a fleet. This allows us to clarify what happened. After the end of the Ionian Revolt, the

cannot serve as proof of a clash between Byzantium and the Persians during the Scythian campaign' (Vasilev 2015: 55), but this is quite wrong. First, one can hardly doubt that Dionysius relied on local Byzantine written and oral tradition, and not on Herodotus: the fact that he gives the wrong name for the builder of the bridge across the strait (see above, n. 50) is consistent with that supposition. Secondly, if we understand the phrase of Dionysius broadly, as we propose, and not in the narrow sense with reference to the very beginning of the campaign and the passage of the Persian troops through the strait, then this phrase takes on a completely non-contradictory meaning: the Byzantine author could have in mind here namely those Persian troops led by Megabazos who remained in Europe after the passage of Darius to Asia – no doubt they also went to the Scythians with the king.

⁹⁵ In this particular instance, as well as in many others, the historian attaches a broader meaning to this place name and understands it (in modern terms) as the region of Turkish Straits as a whole.

⁹⁶ For the most detailed account of Megabazos' activities, see Boteva 2011: 745–749; Vasilev 2015: 47–50, 56–57, 65, 71–73, 84–92, 105–109, 111–124 (with different interpretations).

⁹⁷ Chalcedon had probably not only recovered after the destruction inflicted by Darius, but was again seeking independence. It is possible, however, that Herodotus, knowing about the subordination of Chalcedon to the Persians in general, but not having specific information available to Ctesias and Polyaeus (about the campaign carried out by Darius himself), attributed this action to Otanes, on whose share numerous and serious successes fell. In this case, we are talking about only one conquest of Chalcedon by the Persians, which happened shortly after the Scythian campaign, and Ctesias and Polyaeus should be recognized as right.

⁹⁸ Archibald 1998: 81; cf. Vasilev 2015: 54.

Byzantines and Chalcedonians did not wait for the Phoenician fleet to arrive but left their cities immediately and went to Mesambria (Hdt. 6. 34)⁹⁹: despite Polybius' judgement that the city has an extremely advantageous position in relation to the sea (4. 44. 11), Byzantium was, it seems, vulnerable to attack by naval forces, and Otanes was in a position to exploit this fact.

The subsequent fate of Darius' stelae

It will be clear that the authors of this article are firmly convinced that the marble fragment from Phanagoreia is part of the stele of Darius described by Herodotus. The crucial elements of Herodotus' account (it will be recalled) are: Darius I himself (mentioned [perhaps] twice in the text of our inscription), a stele with a Persian inscription erected by the king virtually 'in the doorway' of the Black Sea, and the Greeks who destroyed that monument and used its fragments for their own purposes – either purely utilitarian or, possibly, also political and ideological¹⁰⁰. We must now consider the various ways in which a piece of that Persian inscription could have found its way to the northern shore of the Black Sea.

The first step is to re-examine the archaeological context of the object. We cannot accept Kuznetsov's view that this context is of decisive importance for dating the monument and establishing whether it belonged to Darius or Xerxes¹⁰¹ – partly (as we have tried to show earlier) because he seems to underestimate the viability of other ways of dating and interpreting the fragment and partly because the particulars of the discovery of the stone in Phanagoreia raise quite a few questions. Correct understanding of the context would be greatly helped by an indication of its location on the map of the site of Phanagoreia and, even more importantly, a photograph of the stone *in situ* in the burnt building and a drawing of the plan of the latter in the topographic context of Phanagoreia (Pl. 4). The unfortunate absence of such information in the publication of the monument

⁹⁹ On the historicity of this passage see: Avram 2017: 12 n. 45 (with earlier literature).

¹⁰⁰ It is even tempting to identify the Phanagorean inscription more precisely as the piece of Darius' stele which Herodotus says was placed next to the temple of Dionysus in Byzantium; we do not exclude this possibility, but to assert it obviously takes a good deal of audacity.

¹⁰¹ Kuznetsov 2018: 166.

significantly complicates its interpretation. It would also, of course, be useful to carry out chemical and mineralogical analysis of the marble in order to determine its geographic origin¹⁰².

But we are where we are, and we have to proceed on the basis that we have only one indisputable archaeological fact: an isolated fragment of an Achaemenid inscription was discovered in a house destroyed by fire in the fifth century B.C. (We will leave it to Phanagorean archaeologists to date more accurately when the building was destroyed. The precise answer is not important for our hypothesis). In all probability, the stone was used as part of the interior structure or furnishing of the house – threshold, step, prop, etc. – and had been brought into it (long?) before the building was destroyed. Kuznetsov based his dating and historical interpretation of the fragment on the view that the destroyed Phanagorean fortifications and the house were closed contexts¹⁰³, but his argument is weak: the fragment had clearly found its way into the latter context before it ‘closed’.

The fact that ‘attempts to discover other fragments of the stele in the excavation area during the 2017 field season were, unfortunately, unsuccessful’¹⁰⁴ (and, to our knowledge, the same was true in 2018 and 2019) together with Kuznetsov’s comment about the exceptional rarity of stone in general, and the absence of marble in particular in early Phanagoreia¹⁰⁵ clearly show that the city never had a whole Persian inscription. There was only a fragment (which had been brought from far away) and there is little doubt that the fragment we have now looks exactly as it did when it arrived in the Cimmerian Bosphorus: otherwise, after ‘the collapse of Achaemenid rule over the Bosphorus’ and the destruction of the inscription with Xerxes’ supposed victory report (according to Kuznetsov’s scenario), the Phanagoreians would certainly have re-used the scarce marble, just as the Byzantines did not hesitate to do (according to Herodotus) – and this despite the fact that they, unlike the Phanagoreians, had ample supplies of that stone. The marble of the broken stele (or, most probably, two stelae) would almost certainly have left some trace in Phanagoreia: it is highly unlikely that the citizens would have thrown it into the sea or calcined it.

¹⁰² *A priori*, it seems most likely that the stone for Darius’ inscription on the Thracian Bosphorus came from Proconessus.

¹⁰³ Kuznetsov 2018: 166.

¹⁰⁴ Kuznetsov & Nikitin 2018: 152 n. 2.

¹⁰⁵ Kuznetsov 2018: 160–161. He believes that ‘there was no necessity’ to use stone but it is more likely that they simply did not have the chance.

Discovery of further fragments of the inscription would, of course, negate this argument, but for the moment we must proceed on the basis that the existing fragment is unique.

The back of the stele was not polished. This makes it very likely that it was erected in a place that did not require such a finish. That makes perfect sense if it stood by some slightly hewn rocks on the shore of the Bosphorus and was part of a complex of structures that made sense in terms of Persian monumental architecture (see above). Had the stone been erected in the acropolis or agora of a Greek *polis* (which is what Kuznetsov's interpretation entails), it would surely have been executed in a different fashion. His interpretation also implies that, after the destruction of the putative inscription of Xerxes immediately in the course of a turmoil in the city, a piece of it was dragged into a house which was then burned. This is incomprehensible.

Our interpretation means that we must take a closer look at the possibility that the stone reached the Cimmerian Bosphorus by 'conveyance of the inscription or its fragment from one of the Ionian cities'¹⁰⁶. Kuznetsov ruled this out because he was thinking in terms of the stone being used as ballast on a voyage from Ionia and considered that such a scenario involved an extraordinary and improbable 'chain of coincidences'¹⁰⁷. Yet, if the Phanagoreian fragment comes from Darius' monuments on the Thracian Bosphorus the geographical and logistical situation changes. The distance between the Thracian Bosphorus and Phanagoreia is not so great¹⁰⁸, and it

¹⁰⁶ Kuznetsov 2018: 160. The mention of Ionian cities here may reflect the initial interpretation of the inscription, posted on the Internet in which it was suggested that Miletus was mentioned in the last line of the text (<http://volnoe-delo.ru/events/news/fanagoriya-nakhodka-etogo-leta/>). If so, it is out of place, since that suggestion has been abandoned.

¹⁰⁷ The size of the Phanagoreian fragment (and, probably, its weight – which, unfortunately, is not given in the publication) fully corresponds with the stones (e.g. millstones) that were used by ancient seafarers as a ballast to increase a ship's stability (to avoid heeling and excessive trimming, to minimize pitching, etc.). See on the ballast of antique ships in general: Williams & Moore 1995; Kiselnikov 2007. It is significant that ballast 'consisting of rounded cobblestones of imported origin' (*italic is our – Auth.*) and large fragments of ceramic tiles produced by Panticapaeum and Sinope was also found in the remains of a ship discovered at the bottom of Taman Bay during the excavation of Phanagoreia in 2012 (Olkhovsky 2012: 23).

¹⁰⁸ Kuznetsov 2018: 161. Epigraphists have long been aware of the phenomenon of '*pierres errantes*', which was thoroughly studied and brilliantly discussed by L. Robert: Robert 1932; 1939; 1966; 1973. The routes of their migration can sometimes be rather

does not look particularly improbable that some part of the marble slab that was brought to Byzantium after Darius' stelae were dismantled in 513 B.C. might then (immediately or somewhat later?) have been taken by a citizen of Phanagoreia who found himself in Byzantium on trade or other business¹⁰⁹.

Why did he take it? It is unlikely that it was intended for the construction of a religious structure like the altar of Artemis Orthosia at Byzantium: the Phanagorean stone did not have the proper dressing to be used for that purpose, and its size and shape would hardly have been suitable.

The stone lay 'face down' in the burnt house. At first sight the residents were no longer interested in it or in the content of its barbarian inscription, but the fact that the stone served as the threshold of the house (see above) suggests another explanation: perhaps the re-use was a peculiar case of *damnatio memoriae*, the purpose being to violate the monument of the King of Kings by making people tread on it. The fact that the stone was laid text down¹¹⁰ is understandable: the letters were cut quite deep, so laying it the other way up would lead to accumulations of dirt that would be inconvenient for those living in the house.

However, we would not like to rule out a more 'romantic' scenario, on whose historical accuracy we shall certainly not dare to insist. As is well known, Phanagoreia was a colony of Anatolian Teos. The citizens of Teos abandoned their native city in 546 B.C., when it was besieged by Cyrus' general Harpagos, in order to avoid the enslavement that would result from defeat, and settled in Abdera on the Aegean coast of Thrace (Hdt. 1. 168,

long and complex. New examples relating to the Pontic region include (1) a decree in honor of Epicrates (2nd c. B.C.?), found in Byzantium, but originating in Olbia Pontica (Cojocaru 2011) and (2) an inscription found in Sukhumi in Abkhazia (2nd cent. A.D.?: Vertogradova 2002) that was apparently written in Doric (as the preserved fragment of the word ΔΑΜΟΣ [?] in line 1 indicates) and most likely came from a Dorian city – e.g. Heraclea Pontica, Callatis or Chersonesus Taurica (all of them quite remote from the coast of the Caucasus). So, in this geographical context, the 'journey' of a fragment of the inscription of Darius from the Thracian Bosphorus to Phanagoreia looks quite possible.

¹⁰⁹ Although there is no specific evidence of Bosporans in Byzantium, there is little doubt that they came there on occasion. An example of reverse travel: Teisias, son of Deloptichus of Byzantium on behalf of his brother Phrasidemus made a dedication to Aphrodite in Panticapaeum in the late fourth century – early third century B.C. (CIRB 17).

¹¹⁰ Contrast, for example, the Anthesterios decree from Olbia: his political adversaries embedded it in the surface of a square or yard, with the result that the central part of the text (not very deeply incised) was almost completely erased (Vinogradov 1984: 51–80, esp. 72–73; Vinogradov 1989: 194).

Strabo. 14. 1. 30)¹¹¹. Clear evidence of the foundation of Phanagoreia by the Teians is given by Pseudo-Arrian (*Per.* 47) and Pseudo-Scymnus (886–887), while Arrian of Nicomedia provides an especially eloquent statement of what forced the Teians to found a new *apoikia* on the Cimmerian Bosphorus: ‘Phanagoreia, that was founded by Phanagoras of Teos, who had fled the insolence of the Persians’ (φεύγων τὴν τῶν Περσῶν ὕβριν)¹¹². Kuznetsov believes that the founders of Phanagoreia came *via* Abdera and not directly from Teos (though they still thought of themselves as Teians)¹¹³, but, whether or not that is the case, the motif of (heroic) preservation of freedom by flight from the Persians must have still been topical in Phanagoreia at the time of the Scythian expedition. Ca. 513 B.C. many of the original colonists will still have been alive and, although a new generation had, of course, been born and raised, memories of the dramatic events surrounding the loss of their native land and the discovery of a new one must have been quite fresh¹¹⁴. The failure of Darius’ European campaign was surely seen by the Bosporan Greeks as well as most other Hellenes (above all those directly affected by the events: the Byzantines, Chalcedonians and citizens of the Propontic *poleis*) as an extremely important, if

¹¹¹ On these events, see Lloyd, Asheri & Corcella 2007: 188–189. Teos was quite a large city, located virtually on a plain. A visit to the site in May 2018 convinced Gabelko that the citizens would have had no chance of withstanding an enemy who hopelessly outnumbered them (Pl. 5, 6).

¹¹² Bithyn. F 55 Roos = Eustath. ad Dion. Perieg. *GGM.* II. 549, p. 324. 36–41. Strabo (14. 1. 30) also offers a very similar description of the Teians’ earlier migration to Abdera.

¹¹³ Kuznetsov 2001: 228; Kuznetsov 2000–2001: 70. Later he narrowed the date of the move of the *apoikia* to the Bosphorus by the Abderites to ca. 540 B.C. (Kuznetsov 2010: 341). The interpretation of the Phanagoreia inscription proposed by us perhaps somewhat decreases the probability of this version but it does not rule it out. Indeed, as will be shown below, the ‘psychological effect’ produced by the inscription fragment brought to Phanagoreia would have been more tangible if its citizens – the first settlers – had themselves been forced to flee the Persians.

¹¹⁴ In this context we should also mention the relationship between the Persians and the citizens of Abdera (on which see Isaac 1986: 89–90). We know that by the time of Xerxes that relationship had become rather good (Hdt. 8. 120). An important step towards normalization was the return of some of the Abderites to Teos (Strabo. 14. 1. 30), but it is not clear exactly when that took place. Kuznetsov has no doubt that it was shortly after Harpagos had conquered Teos (Kuznetsov 2001: 232; 2010: 314). A.J. Graham, who studied the problem in much more detail (Graham 1992), proposed an additional variant, that it could be after the Ionian revolt as well. We believe that the latter view is more probable: it is hardly likely that any of the Teians who went to Abdera changed their mind about the Persians so radically in such a short time.

not indeed epoch-making, event – an event that marked, as it might have seemed at the time, the collapse of the Achaemenid claim to rule in Europe and even in the Greek world as a whole. Of course, nobody could have imagined the great and dramatic events that actually lay ahead: the Ionian revolt, the battle of Marathon, the invasion of mainland Greece by Xerxes, the battles of Thermopylae, Salamis, Plataea and of Mycale, the following decades of highly tense military and diplomatic confrontation... Still, bearing in mind that the Greeks' demolition of the structures put up by Darius clearly had a symbolic meaning (just as their erection did), we may reasonably assume that pieces of those structures were liable to be collected as 'souvenirs' (probably right after the pillars were destroyed and in the very place where they had been erected)¹¹⁵, and that such souvenirs were perceived as trophies by those who got their hands on them. Herodotus records that one fragment of the inscription lay next to the temple of Dionysus in Byzantium and, although we cannot call this a 'proper' offering in a temple, the location makes clear the political and religious overtones of the demolition of Darius' monuments – a retribution for that very Persian *hubris* of which Arrian speaks in the context of Phanagoreia. One may legitimately compare the dedication of parts of Xerxes' Hellespont bridge in Greek temples (Hdt. 9. 121) as a marker of the end of Persian aggression against European Greece¹¹⁶. If we assume that a fragment of the Persian inscription from the European shore of the Thracian Bosphorus was brought to the Cimmerian Bosphorus in a similar spirit, it will be clear why it turned up precisely in Phanagoreia, a place whose citizens had their own scores to settle with the Persians¹¹⁷. Brought by one of the citizens, it is possible that it was on public display for some time in (or next to) a temple or other public building. If so, its find-spot shows that in due course public display came to an end. Or perhaps it remained in the private sphere all along, passed from generation to generation as a kind of family heirloom. In any

¹¹⁵ The citizens of Chalcedon may well have done the same to fragments of the altar of Zeus Diabaterios. In this context one should remember that Greeks were fond of all kinds of exotic curiosities, especially of eastern origin; on this subject, see Sinitsyn 2015, 187–192, with an extensive list of references.

¹¹⁶ On this see the recent profound and substantial article by Sinitsyn 2017.

¹¹⁷ Especially so in the light of possible Persian attempts to gain control over the Cimmerian Bosphorus. Such attempts can *to a certain extent* be illustrated by the expedition of Ariaramnes, the Cappadocian satrap, to the North Pontic littoral (Ctes. *FGrHist* 688. F. 13. 20). This episode requires special study that goes beyond the scope of this paper.

event, if the explanation of its eventual use as a threshold given above is correct, it never quite lost its ‘symbolic’ meaning.

Detailed analysis of the issues connected with the creation and destruction of the Persian monuments on the Thracian Bosphorus reveals a number of very interesting nuances in the relationship between the Persians and the Greeks living on the coasts of the Black Sea approaches at the end of the 6th century B.C. Meanwhile, the Phanagoreia inscription does not, admittedly, provide us with substantial new details in the history of the Greek North Pontic littoral, but it may nonetheless attest the existence of a ‘moral opposition’ among the Bosphoran Greeks (or some of them) to Achaemenid imperial ambitions.

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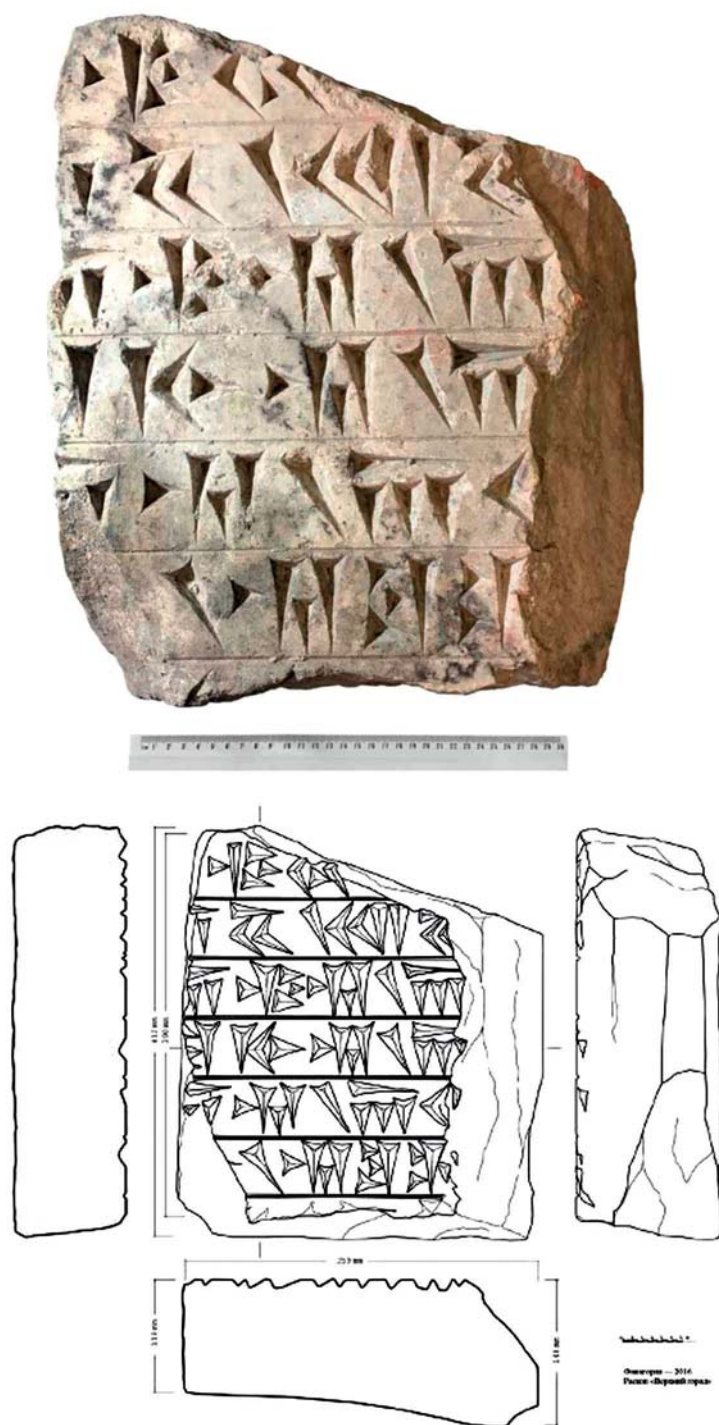
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- <http://www.iranicaonline.org/articles/bridges>
- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fatih_Sultan_Mehmet_Bridge

Abbreviations

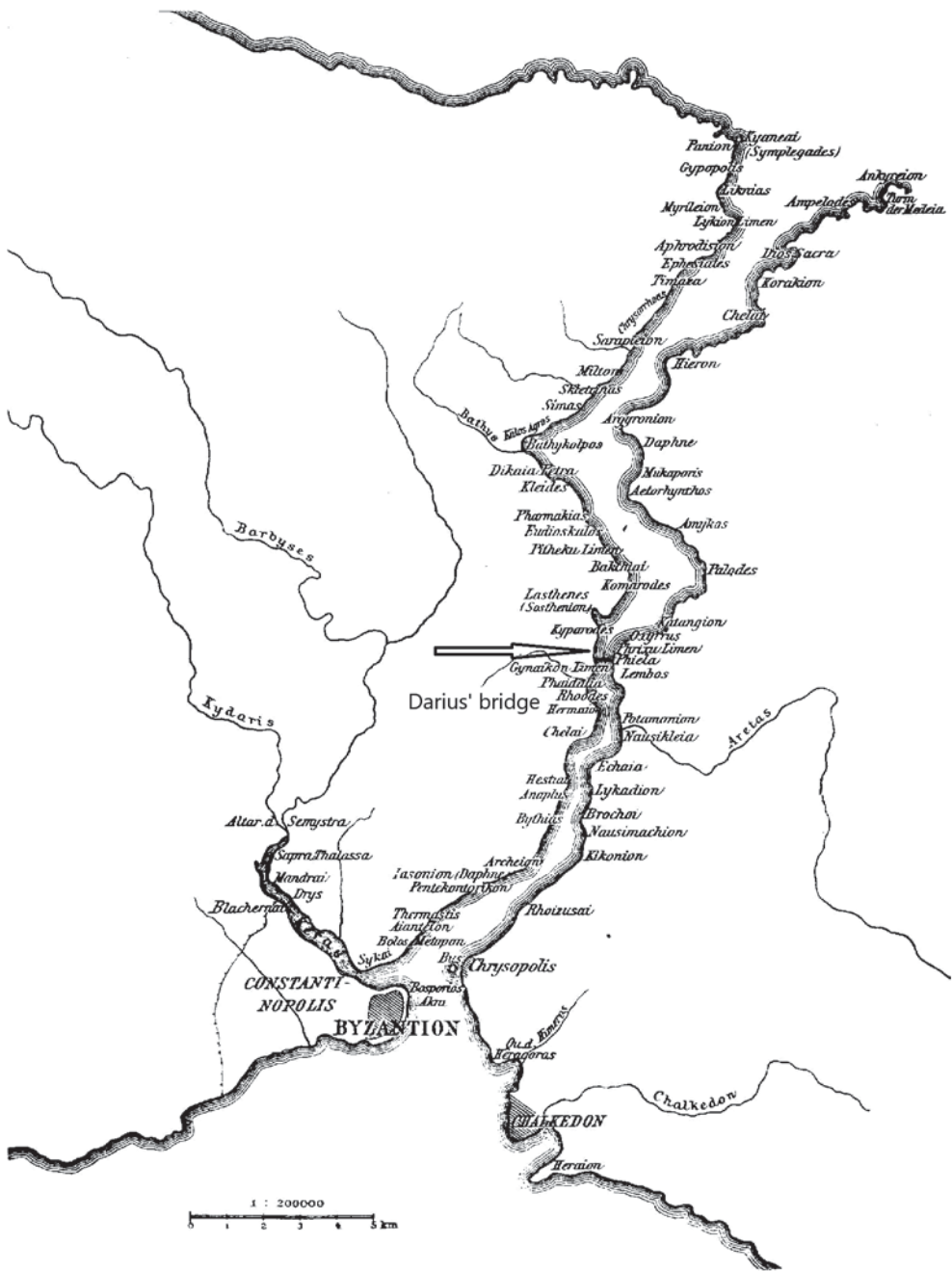
- | | |
|---------|--|
| BNJ | <i>Brill's New Jacoby</i> . |
| CIRB | Struve, V.V., et al. (red.), 1965. <i>Corpus inscriptionum Regni Bosporani</i> , Moscow. |
| FGrHist | Jacoby, F., 1923-. <i>Die Fragmente der Griechischen Historiker</i> , Berlin – Leiden. |
| GGM | Müller, K. (rec.), 1855. <i>Geographi Graeci minoris</i> , I–II, Paris. |
| IvByz | Łajtar, A. (ed.), 2000. <i>Die Inschriften von Byzantium</i> , Inschriften Griechischer Städte aus Kleinasien 58, Bonn. |
| ML | Meiggs, R. & Lewis, D.M. (eds.), 1969. <i>A Selection of Greek Historical Inscriptions to the End of the Fifth Century BC</i> , Oxford (revised ed. 1988). |
| SEG | <i>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum</i> , Leiden, 1923-. |

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Pl. 1. The fragment of an Old Persian inscription from Phanagoreia: photo and drawing (after Kuznetsov & Nikitin 2019: 3–5).



Pl. 2. The Thracian Bosphoros (after Oberhummer 1897: 749–750).



Pl. 3. *Fatih Sultan Mehmet* Bridge (photo by Oleg Gabelko
+ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fatih_Sultan_Mehmet_Bridge).



Pl. 4. Phanagoreia: the trench 'Upper city' (<http://phanagoria.info/press-center/news/arkheologi-vozobnovili-issledovaniya-akropolya-fanagorii-/>)



Pl. 5. Ruins of ancient Teos: theatre (photo by Oleg Gabelko).



Pl. 6. Ruins of ancient Teos: acropolis (photo by Oleg Gabelko).

DIE TEXTE HUMBANNUMENAS

BY

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Abstract: There are three royal inscriptions authored by Humbannumena (c. 1350 BC), one written in Elamite (EKI 4C) and two written in Akkadian (EKI 4B and the Tavernier fragment). All three were found in Liyan. In the present paper, a morpheme analysis is given for EKI 4C. Compared to previous translations, some modifications are proposed, the most consequential of which being the rejection of a sumerian loanword *men* ‘crown’ in Elamite: Based on contemporaneous text copies of EKI 4C which read *tak-ú-me* instead of *tak-me*, the analysis of line IV must be *sit tak-(ú-)me en pišši-k* ‘the destiny of my life is established’ instead of *sitta-k men pišši-k* ‘prosperity is re-established and the crown is restored’. Various other arguments for the new translation are put forward. As the alleged ‘restored crown’ had been the starting point for the “usurpator thesis” as well as the “double monarchy thesis”, a fresh view on the succession to the throne in the Igihalkid dynasty is necessary.

Keywords: Humbannumena, Middle Elamite Igihalkid dynasty, royal inscription

1. Einleitung

Humbannumena, dessen Name ‚Gott Humban ist mir eine Autorität‘ bedeutet (Tavernier 2016: 10)¹, war der sechste Herrscher der Igihalkiden-Dynastie, die am Ende des 14. Jh. v. Chr. die Macht erklomm. In dieser Arbeit werden alle drei bekannten Texte besprochen, die mit Sicherheit von Humbannumenas Schreibern verfasst worden sind: die vollständig

¹ Nur im Herrschernamen „Humbannumena“ und in vereinzelten Eigennamen wird der Name des Hauptgottes Humban ausgeschrieben. Überall sonst versteckt er sich wohl hinter dem Beinamen *Napir-riša* ‚grosser Gott‘, geschrieben ^dGAL (Hinz 1965: 352). Anders wäre es schwierig zu erklären, warum der für Elam wohl wichtigste Gott – Humban wird schon im Naram-Sin-Vertrag prominent erwähnt und ist noch in achämenidischer Zeit der Gott, der am meisten Opfergaben erhält, vgl. Henkelman 2008: 60 – in den Königsinschriften so selten genannt wird. Diese Tabu-These ist allerdings umstritten, weshalb in vorliegender Arbeit ^dGAL (= ^{nap}GAL) als Napiriša wiedergegeben wird.

erhaltene, elamisch geschriebene Weihinschrift EKI 4C (Kapitel 2), das Fragment einer akkadischen Variante dieser Weihinschrift (Kapitel 3) und ein Fragment in archaischer Schrift (Kapitel 4). Daraus gezogene Erkenntnisse zu Geschichte und Politik der Igiḫalkiden-Dynastie werden in Kapitel 5 zusammengefasst. Besondere Aufmerksamkeit erfährt die igiḫalkidische Thronfolgeregelung und Humbannumenas politische Legitimation.

Nebst den inhaltlichen werden mit dieser Arbeit didaktische Ziele verfolgt, um dem Einsteiger bzw. Nichtelamisten den Zugang zur mittellelamischen Grammatik zu erleichtern. So werden für Text 4C die Schriftzeichen in Einzelumschrift angegeben. Und es wird, zusätzlich zu Transliteration und Transkription, eine Morphemanalyse versucht. Diese soll einerseits Schwierigkeiten der mittellelamischen Grammatik offenlegen. Andererseits ist sie ein Schritt hin zu einem lemmatisierten elektronischen Korpus der elamischen Sprache.

2. EKI 4C

Die hier besprochene elamische Inschrift ist in sechs Kopien vorhanden, wobei deren zwei leicht abweichende Schriftzeichen aufweisen (vgl. Kommentar zu Satz IV, S. 6). Alle Varianten wurden in Bender Bušehr am Persischen Golf gefunden und erstmals von Pézard (1914, MDP XV, Tf. XI, 1 sowie XIII, 1 und 2), später in CIE 4C (Abzeichnung) und EKI 4C (Transliteration und Übersetzung) publiziert.

Zwei von sechs Kopien sind vollständig erhalten und identisch. Sie sind 33 cm lang, 8,5/9,5 cm hoch und 15 cm tief. Der Lehm ist ockerfarben, dicht und feinkörnig (Malbran-Labat 1995: 61). Die acht Zeilen sind mit geritzten Linien voneinander getrennt. Die Schriftzeichen sind sorgfältig und regelmässig gesetzt, wenn auch nicht in dem Masse wie jene von Untaš-Napiriša, dem Sohn und Nachfolger Humbannumenas.

2.1 Übersetzung und Morphemanalyse

(I)



| e |^{nap} | GAL |^{nap} | ki | ri | ri | ša | a | ak |^{nap} | ba | ha | hu | ti | ip | pe |^{aš} | li | ia | an | ip | ba |

[illegible]

(IIa)

| ú | ^I | nap | hu | ban | nu | me | na | ša | ak | ^I | at | tar | ki | tah | gi | ik || li | ku | me | ri | ša | ak | ka₄ | me | ir | ri | ik |

Translit.	ú	¹ napHu-ban-nu-me-na	ša-ak	¹ At-tar-ki-tah-gi-ik	li-ku-me	ri-ša-ak-ka ₄	me-ir-ri-ik
Transkr.	ú	<i>Humbannumena</i>	<i>šak</i>	<i>Attarkittah-k-ik</i>	<i>lik-ume</i>	<i>riša-k</i>	<i>merri-k</i>
Morph.	Ich	Humbannumena	Sohn	Attarkittah-BK-KS1	Reich-mein	gross-KS1	betreuen-KS1
Übers.	Ich (bin) Humbannumena, der Sohn des Attarkittah, der Grossartige meines Reiches, der Betreuer von						

(IIb)

| ha | tà̃m | ti | ik | ka₄ | at | ri | ha | tà̃m | ti | ik | hal | me | ni | ik | ha | tà̃m | ti | ik | su | un | ki | ik |

aš	an	za	an	aš	šu	šu	un	ka
----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----	----

[illegible]

(VIa)



| a | ak | | si | ia | an | pu | ur | ki | me | ru | ru | uk | pi | it | te | im | ma |

Translit.	a-ak	si-ia-an	pu-ur-ki-me	ru-ru-uk	pi-it-te-im-ma
Transkr.	<i>ak</i>	<i>sijan</i>	<i>purki-me</i>	<i>ruru-k</i>	<i>pite-imma</i>
Morph.	und	Tempel	Vorzeit-KSN	einstürzen-PP	Stelle-darin
Übers.	Der Tempel aus der Vorzeit war eingestürzt, in der(selben) Umfassung				

(VIb)



| ku | ku | un | nu | um | pe | ip | ši | ia | ku | ši | ih |

Translit.	ku-ku-un-nu-um	pe-ip-ši-ia	ku-ši-ih
Transkr.	<i>kukunnum</i>	<i>pipši-h-a</i>	<i>kuši-h</i>
Morph.	Hochtempel	neu erstellen-1.SG.PERF-CON	bauen-1.SG.PERF
Übers.	erstellte ich den Hochtempel neu, ich baute ihn (fertig),		

(VII)



| ^{nap} | GAL | ^{nap} | ki | ri | ri | ša | a | ak | ^{nap} | ba | ha | hu | ti | ip | pe | i | du | ni | ih |

Translit.	^{nap} GAL	^{nap} Ki-ri-ri-ša	a-ak	NAPIP	ba-ha	hu-ti-ip-pe	i-du-ni-ih
Transkr.	<i>Napiriša</i>	<i>Kiririša</i>	<i>ak</i>	<i>nap-ippe</i>	<i>paha</i>	<i>hut-ippe</i>	<i>i-n-duni-h</i>
Morph.	Gott-KSN-gross	Kiririša	und	Gott-KSPL	gütig	machen-KSPL	er-AKK-geben-1.SG.PERF
Übers.	und weihte ihn dem Napiriša, der Kiririša und den gütig handelnden Göttern.						

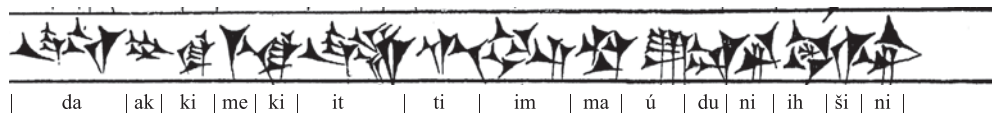
(VIIIa)



| ^{nap} | GAL | ^{nap} | ki | ri | ri | ša | a | ak | ^{nap} | ba | ha | hu | ti | ip | pe |

Translit.	^{nap} GAL	^{nap} Ki-ri-ri-ša	a-ak	NAPIP	ba-ha	hu-ti-ip-pe
Transkr.	<i>Napiriša</i>	<i>Kiririša</i>	<i>ak</i>	<i>nap-ippe</i>	<i>paha</i>	<i>hut-ippe</i>
Morph.	Napiriša	Kiririša	und	Gott-KSPL	gütig	machen-KSPL
Übers.	Der Napiriša, die Kiririša und die gütig handelnden Götter					

(VIIIb)



Translit.	da-ak-ki-me	ki-it-ti-im-ma	ú-du-ni-ih-ši-ni
Transkr.	<i>takki-me</i>	<i>kitti-imma</i>	<i>u-n-tuni-hši-ni</i>
Morph.	Leben	Dauer-darin	ich-DATIV-geben-3.PL-OPT
Übers.	mögen mir ein Leben in Dauer geben!		

(IX)



Translit.	su-un-ki-me	tu-ur	hi-ih	si-ti-im-ma	un ša-am-me-ih-ši-ni
Transkr.	<i>sunki-me</i>	<i>tur</i>	<i>hih</i>	<i>sit-imma</i>	<i>u-n-šame-hši-ni</i>
Morph.	König-KSN	Herz	Freude	Gesundheit-darin	ich-AKK-zuweisen-3.PL-OPT
Übers.	Ein wohlgesundes Königtum der Herzensfreude mögen sie mir gönnen!				

2.2 Kommentar

Jene Stellen, die gegenüber den Versionen von König (EKI 4) und Malbran-Labat (1995: 59) abweichen oder bei denen Unklarheit herrscht, sind im Folgenden kommentiert.

(I) *NAPIR ba-ha hu-ti-ip-pe*

Wenn auch in ganz anderem Zusammenhang, hat Hinz (1967: 67) gezeigt, dass *baha* ‚gut‘ bedeutet. Statt ^{nap}*Baha* können wir also *NAPIR ba-ha* lesen und mit ‚gute Götter‘ übersetzen. *hut-ip* bedeutet wohl ‚die Machenden‘. Obwohl in dieser Form nur einmal belegt (ElW S. 707 s.v. [h]u-ti-ib-be), sprechen die achämenidenelamischen ŠE.SA.A.lg.v.hu-ti-ir ‚die Röstgerste Machenden; Röstgerste-Hersteller‘ und KAŠ.lg.hu-ti-ra ‚die Bier Machenden; Bierbrauer‘ für diese Interpretation. Für die ganze Wendung *NAPIR baha hutippe* ergibt sich somit ‚gutmütig handelnde Götter‘ oder ‚gutmeinende Götter‘. Dass mit gutmeinenden Göttern die Schutzgottheiten der jeweiligen Stadt gemeint sind (z.B. EKI S. 39), ist wahrscheinlich, weil die *NAPIR baha hutippe* immer zusammen mit einer Stadt genannt werden. Ich ziehe aber die wörtliche Übersetzung vor.

Dass der KSPL *-ippe* und nicht *-ippa* lautet, dürfte auf eine Art Vokalharmonie mit dem Stammvokal *u* in *hut-* zurückzuführen sein. Falls wahr, würde das bedeuten, dass das elamische *u* die Suffixvokale hin zu *e* (und nicht *a*) harmonisiert und somit als heller Vokal gehört wurde. Dies lässt eine Aussprache als /u/ oder /ʉ/ vermuten, was gestützt wird durch die im elamischen häufig beobachtete Alternation zwischen *u* und *i*.

(IIa) *ri-ša-ak-ka₄*

Die Form ist zu analysieren als *riša-* ‚gross‘ und *ka₄* = ks1. Hat sich das RAE Interrogativpronomen *akka* vielleicht aus dieser ME-Form des ks1 entwickelt? Also eine Entwicklung ks1 > Rel.pr. > Int.pr.? Jedenfalls sehen wir, dass eine Wurzel (hier *riša-* ‚gross/vergrössern/Grösse‘) suffigiert mit ks1 den Sinn eines Relativsatzes mit vollendetem/resultativem Aspekt erhält: ein ‚gross(machen)-ich‘ kann auch als ‚..., der ich gross mache (mit dem Resultat, dass etwas gross sein wird)‘ verstanden werden. Zum Umstand, dass hier ein ks1 vorliegt und nicht das spätere Pronomen *akka*, siehe König (EKI S. 38, Anm. 15).

(IIa) *me-ir-ri-ik*

Drei Hypothesen kommen in Frage:

- a) Gemäss ElW, S. 911 (akzeptiert von Malbran-Labat 1995: 59 und Koch 2007: 129) bedeutet *me-ir-ri-ik* ‚Machthaber‘ und ist gleichzusetzen mit einem einmalig vorkommenden *menik* (ohne Referenz). Demnach habe sich *merri-* aus *men(ir)ri-* kontrahiert.
- b) Daneben ist möglich, dass wir es mit einer Wurzel **merri-/mirri-* ‚betreuen, pflegen‘ zu tun haben. König (1965: 95) argumentiert dafür wie folgt: „Aus der Stelle im Fluch Nr. 48 b §7 *akka menirri...inri mirrinri* ergibt sich, dass ein späterer König, wenn er nicht das Werk erhält und pflegt, bestraft wird; daher ist auch klar, dass **mirri-* dasselbe wie **merri-* ist, woher wir den Titel *merrik Hatamtik* ‚Betreuer von Elam‘ erklären können“.
- c) Als dritter Vorschlag ist vorsichtig hinzuweisen auf RAE *meri(r)*, geschrieben *me-ri(-ir)*, ‚(lui) à l’arrière de lui‘, von Hinz/Koch fragend als ‚ein Nachkommender(?)‘ ins ElW aufgenommen. Es gibt nur zwei Belege, deshalb ist nicht zu entscheiden, ob *merri-ik Hatamti-k* möglicherweise ‚ich, (ein) Nachkomme/Abkömmling Elams‘ heisst.

(IIb) *ka₄-at-ri*

Das Wort ist das Regens einer Genitivkonstruktion. Dass am Regens das Klassensuffix weggelassen werden kann, hat Hüsing (1916b: 227) gezeigt. Der Auslaut *-ri* muss also nicht als Klassensuffix aufgefasst werden, er dürfte zum Wortstamm gehören. Für die im EIW vorgeschlagene Übersetzung ‚Throninhaber‘ spricht auf den ersten Blick *gat* ‚Thron‘. Allerdings ist dieser erst im RAE belegt, und es wird sich um ein Lehnwort aus dem Altpersischen handeln (vgl. den Eintrag *gāθu-* ‚Thron‘ bei Tavernier 2007: 554). Im Mittelelamischen hat ein elamisches *gat* ‚Thron‘ also noch nicht existiert. Zudem erstaunt die Vorstellung, dass ein solch zentraler Herrscherbegriff in den ganzen Königsinschriften nur einmal vorkommen soll. In Betracht zu ziehen ist deshalb der Vorschlag Königs, der vermutet, *katru/katri* „wird irgendwie zu *kutur* gehören“ (EKI S. 36). Letzteres haben wir in EKI 75 (S. 157) mit *ku-tur* ^{as}*A-a-tām-ir-ra* ‚Aiatamischer Pfleger‘ (‚Thronfolger‘ würde hier semantisch nicht gehen, denn es spricht ein Tempelwirt über einen anderen) sowie im Herrscherbeinamen *kutur* ‚Hirte, Führer‘.

(III) *tu-ur-na*

Zum Verständnis des Suffix *-na* sind Korpusuntersuchungen nötig: Khaçikjan (1998: 17) nennt *-a* ein „relative/connective particle“ und schreibt: „the relative/connective particle *-a* was widely used to form verbal adjectives (passive participles)“, sowie (1998: 15): „At a later period (NE and especially AE) the marker *-ni* coupled with *-a* (*-na*) was often used to denote possessive relationship.“ Mangels anderer Erklärung und in Übereinstimmung mit Königs Übersetzung (EKI) fasse ich hier – obwohl mittelelamisch! – *-na* < *-ni-a* als POSS auf². Für *tur* ‚Inneres, Herz‘ sieht König eine Bestätigung in der Opposition von *tur hih* ‚Herzenswärme‘ und *tur zahri* ‚Herzenskälte‘ in EKI 40 VII, S. 92. Siehe auch EKI S. 57, Anm. 12. Deshalb interpretiert König *amma turna* mit ‚Mutter-Inneres, Mutterleib‘. Dann wäre *-na* der bei König nicht besprochene, obenerwähnte POSS³. Anders sehen es Hinz und Koch (Koch 2007: 129, auch EIW S. 387), die

² Dieses Thema muss dringend systematisch geklärt werden mit den Fragestellungen: „Wie können *-ni* und *-a* für ME isoliert werden?“ Und: „Ist *-na* immerzu als POSS aufzufassen?“

³ Diese Interpretation wirft die Frage auf: Sind, entgegen Khaçikjan (1998: 17), weitere als POSS verwendete Suffixe *-na* zu vermelden?

eine kausale Postposition sehen und ‚meiner Mutter wegen‘ übersetzen (diese Vermutung äusserte schon Hüsing (1916a: 43)). Sie begründen damit, dass das zwei Mal vorkommende *ah-pi tu-ur-na* ‚der Abstammung wegen‘ heissen könnte. Allerdings erklären sie nicht, wie in diesem Fall *tur hih* und *tur zahri* zu verstehen wären. Aus diesem Grund ist der Vorschlag Königs ‚(schon) im Mutterleibe‘ zu berücksichtigen.

(IV) *si-it tak-(ú-)me en*

Die Analyse in *si-it-tak* ‚prospérité[?] établie‘ und *me-en* ‚couronne‘, wie sie Malbran-Labat (1995: 59) vornimmt, ist aus folgenden Gründen abzulehnen:

1) Gemäss König (EKI S. 38, Anm. 1) haben zwei Kopien der Inschrift Schreibvarianten, die erklärt werden müssen: für *tak-me* steht auch *tak-ú-mi* (Variante B₄) sowie *tak-ú-me* (B₂). Da ein **tak-ú* nicht alleine stehen kann, muss *-me* das bekannte Suffix für die Abstraktklasse (KSN) sein. Somit ist *tak-(ú-)me* ‚mein Leben‘ bzw. *sit tak-(ú-)me* ‚mein Lebenslos‘ oder ‚mein gütliches Lebensschicksal‘ gesichert.

2) Das Partizip *piš-ši-ik* würde sich bei Malbran-Labats Interpretation auf zwei Objekte gleichzeitig beziehen (‚prospérité[?]‘ und ‚couronne‘). Typisch elamisch wäre hingegen die Wiederholung des Partizips.

3) *men* wird seit Tavernier 2016 mit ‚Autorität‘ übersetzt. Für den von Grillot (1984: 187) stammenden Vorschlag ‚tiare, couronne, cercle‘, mit einem Verweis auf sumerisch *men* ‚Krone‘, auf den sich Malbran-Labat offensichtlich stützt, fehlen jegliche Parallelen, Referenzen und Erklärungen.

4) Dass *si-it(-ti)* ‚gesund, Gesundheit, Wohlergehen‘ heisst, ist einigermassen gesichert (ElW S. 1079). Auch ‚gütliches Schicksal‘ gehört zum Wortfeld. Aus Malbran-Labats Vorschlag ergibt sich ein *si-it-tak* ‚prospérité[?] établie‘, wobei sie hinter *-tak* offenbar *da-ak* ‚abgelegt(e) Tontafel‘ bzw. in ihrer Auslegung ‚établie‘ sieht. Allerdings ist *da-ak* aber erst in altpersischer Umgebung belegt – zweimal in den Persepolis Fortification Tablets und einmal in der Dareios-Inschrift von Behistun (vgl. ElW S. 248). Ausserdem wäre für das Abstraktum ‚prospérité établie‘ **si-it(-me) da-ak-me* zu erwarten. Auch dass *si-it-tak* durch die Suffigierung von *siti* mit dem Partizipmarker *-k* entstand, ist unwahrscheinlich; man würde für ‚gesundet, wohlgeraten‘ **si-(it-)ti-ik* oder **si-(it-)ti-ik-ka* erwarten.

5) Es wäre überraschend, wenn das Keilschriftzeichen *tak* für die Wiedergabe der Silbe *ta* sowie das Suffix *-k* verwendet würde. Zu erwarten wäre vielmehr die Schreibweise *ta-ak*.

6) Dafür, dass die Silbe *en* nicht zu einem Wort *me-en* ‚couronne‘ gehört, sondern viel eher ein Verbalpräfix *en-* mit der präpositiven Bedeutung ‚hierhin‘ ist, spricht meines Erachtens, dass es im Elamischen in der Tat Präpositionen gibt, die als Verbalpräfixe dienen⁴:

<i>ikki-hut</i>	dorthin + machen	=	‚übersetzen‘
<i>tippe-ta</i>	nach vorn + platzieren	=	‚schicken‘
<i>emi-du</i>	weg + nehmen	=	‚wegnehmen‘

Die zwei Beispiele mit *en-* als Präfix sind:

<i>en-zukka</i>	hierhin + legen (?)	=	‚daraufgelegt (?)‘ ⁵
<i>en-pišši</i>	hierhin + stellen	=	‚(dazu) festlegen‘

Das präpositive *en-* dürfte etwas wie ‚hierfür, hierhin, hierzu, dazu‘ heissen, was der Interpretation von *en* als Demonstrativum (drei Belege in ElW S. 397, vgl. auch Koch 1980: 114) zumindest nicht widerspricht. Jedenfalls ist aus den genannten sechs Gründen die Analyse in *tak-me* ‚Leben‘ und *en* vorzuziehen.

(VIa) *ru-ru-uk*

König übersetzt den Begriff nicht und hält ihn für ein Nomen, d.h. einen Gebäudenamen. Hinz/Koch (ElW S. 1048) schlagen ‚alt, schadhaft‘ vor. In der Vermutung, der Auslaut *-k* markiere ein Partizip, wähle ich ähnlich wie Malbran-Labat (‚complètement détruit‘, 1995: 60) ‚eingestürzt‘.

(VIa) *pi-it-te-im-ma*

Das Wort *pite* ‚(abgegrenzte) Stelle‘ gehört wohl zum Verb *pite* ‚placer à l’intérieur de‘ (Grillot 1983: 8) sowie zum Partizip *pi-it-te-ka* ‚umschlossen, abgesteckt‘.

Entsprechend schlägt Malbran-Labat (1995: 61) ‚à l’intérieur‘ für *pi-it-te-im-ma* vor. Eine weiterführende Analyse ist womöglich *pite-imma* ‚Stelle-darin‘ = ‚dort hinein, in die(selbe) Umfassung‘, da wir *imma* auch an anderen Stellen als semantisches ‚darin‘ verstehen können, so *kitti-imma*

⁴ Beispiele aus Vallat 2011: 265.

⁵ EKI 15, IV.

‚Dauer-darin‘ = ‚dauerhaft‘ und *siti-imma* ‚Gesundheit-darin‘ = ‚in (voller) Gesundheit‘. An der einzigen Belegstelle, wo *imma* alleine steht (vgl. ElW S. 754), wäre die Übersetzung ‚da, darin‘ zumindest nicht unpassend.

(VIb) *pe-ip-ši-ia*

Dieses Wort ist zu analysieren als *pipši-h-a* ‚erneuern-1.SG-CON und zu übersetzen als ‚ich habe erneuert und‘. Zum Wandel *iha* > *iya* s. Reiner (1969: 81), zur Konnektivpartikel CON s. Khačikjan (1998: 17). Malbran-Labat (1995: 59) hatte eine Übersetzung als Partizip (‚refundé‘) vorgeschlagen, König (EKI S. 39) übersetzt ‚göttlich‘.

(VII) *i-n-du-ni-ih*

Der gewohnten Verbform *duni-h* ‚ich gebe‘ wird das Objektpronomen *in* vorangestellt, das sich aus dem Pronomen *i* ‚er/sie‘ und dem Objektsuffix *-n* (glossiert als AKK) zusammensetzt. Das Objektsuffix kann vor Plosiven in der Schreibung weggelassen werden, so in den Schreibweisen *ú-du-ni-ih* (VIIIb), *i-du-ni-ih* (VII) und weiteren, muss aber nicht, wie die Schreibweise *un-du-ni-iš* (IV) zeigt.⁶

(VIII) *ki-it-ti-im-ma*

Das Wort als Ganzes heisst ‚ewig, dauerhaft‘ und kommt nebst dem hier besprochenen in zwei weiteren Texten vor (vgl. ElW S. 471). Es ist wohl aufzuteilen in einerseits *kittin* ‚Dauer‘, das drei Mal belegt ist (ElW S. 471 s. v. *ki-it-ti-in*) bzw. dessen Stamm *kit-*, und andererseits *imma* ‚darin‘. Siehe die Erklärungen zu VIa) *pi-it-te-im-ma*.

(IX) *si-ti-im-ma*

Hier liegt eine analoge Wortfügung vor: *siti-* als Wurzel für ‚gesund-‘ – vielleicht auch eine Kurzform von *sitme* ‚Gesundheit‘ – wird kombiniert mit *imma* ‚darin‘.

⁶ In welchem Anteil der Fälle das *-n* fallengelassen wird, muss eine Korpusuntersuchung zeigen.

3. EKI 4B

Das vorliegende Fragment, erstmals publiziert von Pézard (1914: 90 sowie Pl. 13), wurde auf dem Areal des Kiririša-Tempels in Liyan, in der Nähe von EKI 4C, gefunden.

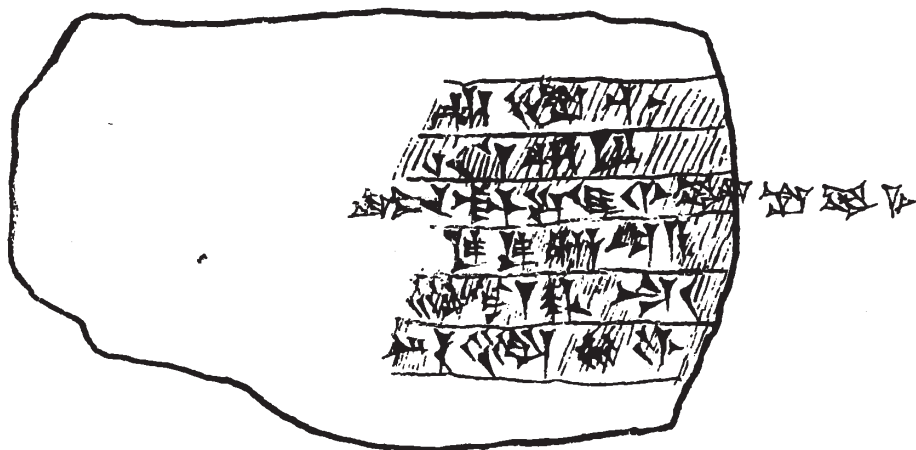


Abb. 1. Abzeichnung in CIE 1926: 4B.

Friedrich Wilhelm König nahm das Fragment als Inschrift 4B in seine Elamischen Königsinschriften (EKI) auf in der Annahme, das Textfragment sei in Elamisch abgefasst. Die Korrektur erfolgte von François Vallat (1984: 259), der die Zeichen als akkadische Übersetzung von 4C liest:

1)	[^m <i>Hu-um-ban-nu-me-na DUMU At-tar-ki-tah...</i>]	<i>EŠŠANA Šu-ši</i>	[<i>u An-za-an...</i>]
2)		[...] ^d <i>MÚSH.EREN</i>	[<i>EŠŠANA-ut Šu-ši u An-za-an id-di-in-ni...</i>]
3)	[... <i>a-na TI.LA-ia a-na</i>]	<i>I.LA SAL Mi-ši-</i>	[<i>im-ru-uh a-na TI.LA SAL Ri-ša-ap-an-la...</i>]
4)		[...] <i>ku-ku-un-na-a e-</i>	[<i>pu-uš-ma...</i>]
5)	[... <i>a-na ND... ad-di</i>]	<i>-in DINGIR GAL ^dKi</i>	[<i>-ri-ri-ša...</i>]
6)	[... <i>EŠŠANA-ut hu-du li-ib</i>]	<i>-bi li-še-pi-</i>	[<i>-ish-ni</i>]
1)	[Je suis Humbannumena, fils d'Attarkitah...]	le roi de Suse	[et d'Anšan...]
2)		[...] Inšušinak	[m'a donné la royauté de Suse et Anšan...]
3)	[... pour ma vie, pour la v]	ie de Miši	[mrüh, pour la vie de Rišapanla ...]
4)		[j'ai construit] le <i>kukunnum</i>	[...]
5)	[...à ND... je l'ai don]	né. Que Napirisha, Ki	[ririša...]
6)		[...me] fasse accomplir	[un règne heu]reux !

3.1 Kommentar

Statt ^{SAL}*Ri-ša-ap-an-la...* ist ^{SAL}*Ri-ša-ap-^{nap}La-an* zu lesen (s. 4C, V, wo allerdings der Auslaut *-n* vor dem *-me* schwindet). Hinz (1950: 349) schlägt für ^{nap}*La-an*, nachdem bereits George Glenn Cameron und andere dahinter ein religiöses Ritual vermutet hatten, ‚Andacht, göttliche Gegenwart‘ vor⁷. Der Frauenname dürfte */Rišablan/* oder */Rišablā/* gesprochen worden sein⁸ und so etwas wie ‚Gross sind sie / Gross ist man, wenn Götter anwesend sind‘ oder ‚die gottbehüteten Grossartigen‘ bedeuten.

^{SAL}*Mi-ši-im-ru-uh* ist möglicherweise Humbannumenas Gattin, die Tochter des Kassitenkönigs Kurigalzu I (Potts 1999: 212).

4. Das Tavernier-Fragment: eine Humbannumena-Inschrift in archaischen Zeichen

Das hier vorgestellte Fragment ist nur noch als Abzeichnung eines durchgepausten Abdrucks vorhanden. Der Abdruck wurde vom französischen Konsul in Bagdad, M. Tavernier, erstellt und von François Lenormant (1873, zit. in Hüsing 1916a: 41) publiziert – zu diesem Zeitpunkt war das Original schon nicht mehr auffindbar. Die Verwendung von altakkadischen Schriftzeichen führte zu der Ansicht, das Schriftstück stamme aus der Mitte des 3. Jt., womit es das Alter des in einem jüngeren Duktus verfassten Naram-Sin-Vertrages (24. Jh.) überstiege und das älteste elamische Schriftstück wäre (so Hüsing 1916a: 41; ihm folgend Hinz 1964: 58). Die Tatsache, dass das Fragment auf dem Gelände des Kiririša-Tempels in Liyan gefunden worden war, führte die Forscher zur Annahme, der dortige Kiririša-Kult sei über tausend Jahre älter als der nächstjüngere diesbezügliche Beleg, nämlich die Erwähnung in Humbannumenas Text 4C. Probleme bereitete indes die Zuordnung zu einem Herrscher/

⁷ Für die Belegstellen und warum es sich wohl um ein Baderitual im Wasserbecken vor dem Kurangān-Relief handelt, siehe Mäder (demnächst), Kap. 3.5 „Die Tradition des *lan*-Wasseropfers und des *limin*-Feuerkults“.

⁸ Die nasalisierte Aussprache der Zeichen auf *-n* und *-m* ist für das Mittelalamische nicht sicher, aber möglich. Hinter der spätestens seit Tepti-Ahar (1500 v. Chr.) aufkommenden abwechselnden Schreibweise *te-ip-ti* / *te-im-ti* ‚Herr‘ (vgl. ElWb S. 313 / ElWb S. 311) könnte die Aussprache */tēti/* stecken. In neuelamischer Zeit scheint die Schreibweise mit *m* eine archaische geworden zu sein. Beispielsweise wurde der Herrschernamen Tem(p)t-Humban als Te-Umma ins Akkadische aufgenommen (Hinz 1964: 60). Ein weiterer Hinweis ist die Alternation *ú-du-ni...* (C4 VIIIb u.a.) / *un-du-ni* (C4 IV).

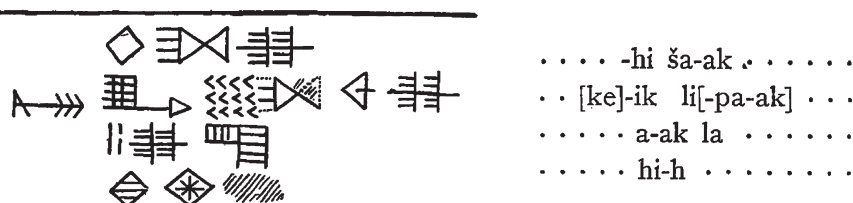



Abb. 2. Abzeichnung und Transliteration aus Hüsing (1916a: 41).

Bauherren. Mit Sicherheit steht dessen Name vor dem Worte *šak* ‚Sohn (des)‘. Doch ein auf *-hi* endender Name (vgl. Abb. 2) ist für das mittlere 3. Jt. (d.h. die Zeit des Königreichs von Awan) trotz fast lückenloser Rekonstruktion der Herrscherabfolge nicht bekannt.

Nun schlägt Erica Reiner (1965: 338) vor, das erste Zeichen nicht *-hi*, sondern *-na* zu lesen. Das Zeichen NA hat unter anderen die Form  (ZATU 378). Es ist nicht unplausibel, dass durch mangelhafte Durchpausung und Abzeichnung die Striche im Innern des Rhombus sowie der Ausfallstrich nach links verloren gingen und aus NA ein HI wurde. Somit kann das Fragment mit dem auf *-na* endenden Herrschernamen Humbanumena in Verbindung gebracht werden und alle Unstimmigkeiten sind beseitigt. Obwohl sonst keine archaisierenden elamischen Texte bekannt sind, hält Reiner (1965: 339) einen gewollten grafischen Rückgriff auf frühere Zeiten für gut möglich – auch sei die Schreibweise vielleicht einer Glasur geschuldet, in die Keilschriftzeichen nur schwer hätten geprägt werden können. Zwar gibt Reiner keine Rekonstruktion der vier Zeilen, doch aus ihren Bemerkungen kann folgendes zusammengefügt werden:

- | | | | |
|----|--|------------|---|
| 1) | [ú ¹ napHu-ban-nu-me-n] | a ša-ak | [¹ At-] |
| 2) | [tar-ki-tah-gi] | -ik li | [-ku-me ri-ša-ak-ka ₄ ...] |
| 3) | [ta-ak-ki-me-u-me ta-ak-ki-me SAL-Mišimruh-me] | a-ak ta(!) | [-ak-ki-me SAL-Rišap-La-me in-ti-ik-ka] |
| 4) | [su-un-ki-me tu-ur] | hi-ih | [si-ti-im-ma un-ša-am-me-ih-ši-ni.] |

Ein Vergleich mit 4C zeigt, dass es sich bei der ersten Zeile um Satz 4C, IIa, 1. Hälfte, bei der zweiten um Satz 4C, IIa, 2. Hälfte, bei der dritten um Satz 4C, V und bei der vierten Zeile um Satz 4C, IX handeln könnte. Die daraus sich ergebende grafische Anordnung hat aber nur unter zwei Bedingungen Sinn: Entweder waren sie auf einem Eckziegel angebracht, mit zwei ganz kurzen auf der Stirn- und mehreren langen Zeilen

auf der Längsseite – solche Anordnungen existieren gemäss Reiner (1965: 339) tatsächlich. Oder aber, es liesse sich für Zeile 2) eine neue Lesung vorschlagen – im Rahmen dieser Arbeit und bei meinen beschränkten Kenntnissen war dies nicht möglich –, die es zuliesse, in vier doppelt so langen Zeilen eine Kopie von 4C zu erkennen.

5. Geschichte und Politik

Humbannumena ist wohl der Enkel Igi-halkis, des Gründers der Igi-halkiden-Dynastie (ca. 1400-1210 v. Chr.). Diese ist der Periode Mittelelamisch II zuzurechnen und wird auch „Zeit des Königreichs von Susa und Anšan“ genannt, weil diese beiden Städte in den Königstiteln konsequent verwendet werden (Potts 1999: 204). Zwei Hauptinformationsquellen helfen uns, die politischen Verhältnisse dieser Zeit zu rekonstruieren: Erstens die Verwandtschaftsangaben der Könige selbst, die in ihren Inschriften meist erwähnen, wessen Sohn sie sind. Zweitens eine Liste von Namen aus der Inschrift Šilhak-Inšušinaks (1155-1136), der in einer Art Bauherren-Huldigung all jene Herrscher aufzählt, die vor ihm Bautätigkeiten am Inšušinak-Tempel in Susa vorgenommen hatten. In seinen eigenen Worten (EKI 48, §3) tönt dies so:

a-p[i] su-[u]n-ki-ip ur-pu-up-pi ha-áš-du^{nap}In-šu-ši-na-ak-ni ha-li-ih-ši.

Diese (sind) die früheren Könige, (die) den Gründungsort des (Gottes) Inšušinak verschönert haben.

Die Bauherren erscheinen in folgender Reihenfolge (EKI 48, §2):

Pahir-iššan,	der Sohn des Igi-halki
A[ttar-kit]tah,	der So[hn des Igi-hal]ki
[Untaš- ^d GAL],	der Sohn des Humbannumena
Unpahaš- ^d GAL,	der Sohn des [Pa]hiriššan
[Ki]tin-Hutran,	der Sohn des Pahir-iššan

Daniel T. Potts (1999: 207) hat aufgrund der Verwandtschaftsangaben in den Königsinschriften einen Stammbaum erstellt (vgl. Abb. 3). Am unsichersten daran ist, ob Attarkittahs Vater wirklich der Dynastiegründer Igi-halki war, da von letzterem in der fraglichen Zeile nur die in elamischen Texten ganz häufige Endung *-ki* erhalten ist. Hingegen konnte die

Tatsache, dass Untaš-^dGAL (Untaš-Napiriša) Humbannumenas Sohn war, aus anderen Quellen erschlossen werden, namentlich aus Untaš-Napirišas eigenen Inschriften. Dass Humbannumena in Šilhak-Inšušinaks Liste nicht auftaucht, überrascht nicht, da er nicht in Susa, sondern in Liyan bauen liess, wie aus der oben behandelten Inschrift EKI 4C ersichtlich ist. Er bezeichnet aber Attarkittah als seinen Vater und ist somit in die Ighalkiden-Dynastie einzureihen, und zwar zwischen seinen Vater Attarkittah und seinen Sohn Untaš-^dGAL (Untaš-Napiriša). Demnach ergibt sich folgende Darstellung:

Die Tatsache, dass Unpahaš-Napiriša den Thron vom Sohn seines Cousins übernahm, deutet darauf hin, dass Unpahaš-Napiriša (und erst recht dessen Bruder Kidin-Hutran I) eher spätgeboren waren, d.h. der Altersunterschied zu ihrem Vater Pahir-iššan gross gewesen sein muss. Möglich ist natürlich auch, dass die Liste Šilhak-Inšušinaks – sie wurde immerhin 200 Jahre nach den Ereignissen verfasst – nicht genau den Tatsachen entspricht. Aus den vorliegenden Daten wurde bisher der Schluss gezogen, die Machtübernahme Humbannumenas sei „not a smooth one“ (Potts 1999: 212) gewesen: Entweder sei dieser als „eine Art Usurpator“ (EKI S. 38, Anm. 10) in Erscheinung getreten, oder aber er habe durch die Gründung einer „nouvelle dynastie“ (Malbran-Labat 1995: 61) die

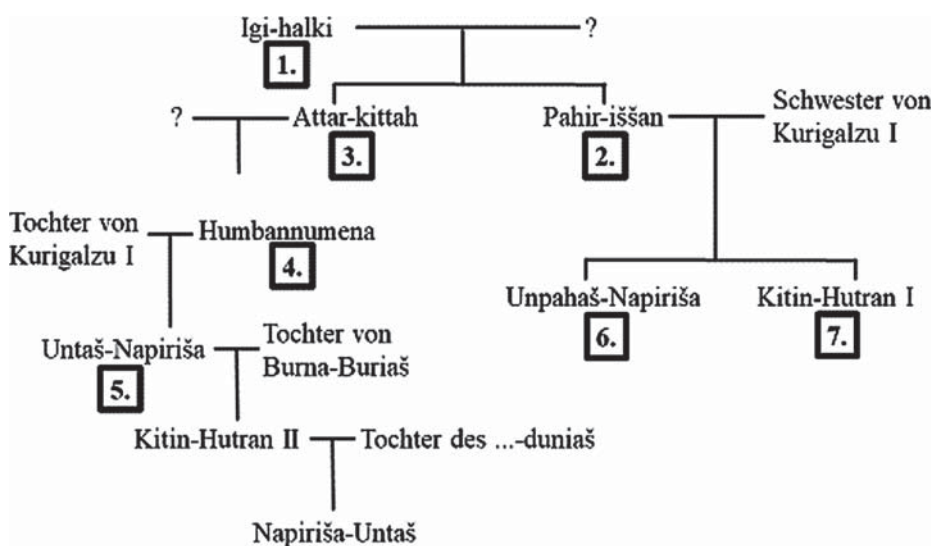


Abb. 3. Der Stammbaum der Ighalkiden-Dynastie nach Potts (1999: 207), ergänzt mit der Herrscherabfolge nach EKI 48, §2.

Igihalkiden in eine „double monarchie“ (Quintana 1996: 93) geführt, indem er nebst der traditionellen westlichen (susianischen) Dynastie eine östliche (liyanisch-anšanische) gegründet habe.

Für die erste, die *Usurpator-These*, wird das Argument ins Feld geführt, die traditionelle Erbschaftsfolge der Brudervererbung (des Fratriarchats) sei gestört worden. Die reguläre, bei den Sukkalmahs (ca. 1900-1600) gelebte Thronfolge sah so aus: Bei Tod des Herrschers folgt dessen ältester Sohn. Stirbt dieser älteste Sohn, folgt sein nächstjüngerer Bruder. Stirbt dieser wiederum, folgt der nächstjüngere Bruder bis zum jüngsten Bruder. Stirbt dieser, folgen die Söhne des ältesten Bruders. Wie in Abb. 3 zu sehen ist, durchbrach nun Humbannumena diese Abfolge. Auf Attar-kittah folgte nicht, wie vorgesehen, Attar-kittahs jüngerer Bruder oder, falls ein solcher nicht vorhanden war, die Söhne des ältesten Bruders Pahir-iššan. Stattdessen kam unplanmässig Humbannumena, der Sohn Attar-kittahs, an die Macht. Es ist deshalb vorstellbar, dass die Söhne Pahir-iššans, nämlich Unpahaš-Napiriša und Kidin-Hutran I, erzürnt waren. König (EKI S. 38, Anm. 10) schliesst daraus: „Also ist Humbannumena eine Art Usurpator mit Hilfe der zwei grossen Götter“. Haben Unpahaš-Napiriša und Kidin-Hutran I ihren Cousin Humbannumena, dessen Wirkkreis nach heutiger Kenntnis nicht über Liyan hinausreichte, an den Ufern Elams in Schach gehalten? Haben sie seiner Regentschaft gar ein gewaltsames Ende bereitet? Ist die relativ spärliche Quellenlage zu Humbannumena ein Zeichen für eine kurze Regierungszeit, oder doch eher, wie Cameron (1936: 99) vermutet, ein Zeichen für eine friedvolle Herrschaft? Jedenfalls ist dem Argument, die Brudervererbung als natürliche Erbfolge sei gestört worden, ein wichtiger Punkt entgegenzusetzen: Wir wissen im Grunde nicht, ob diese Tradition überhaupt noch aktuell war. Nicht einmal für die vorangehende Zeit, die frühmittelelamische Periode (Mittelelamisch I) ist zweifellos gesichert, ob die Brudervererbung noch gelebt wurde. Für Mittelelamisch II ist sie jedenfalls keine fest etablierte Thronfolgeregel (Yusifov 1976: 324). Deshalb ist die Usurpator-These nicht genügend belegt.

Für die zweite, die *double-monarchie-These*, gibt es folgende Argumente:

a) die Berufung auf die Mutter [4C, III]

Malbran-Labat (1995: 60) argumentiert, die Bezugnahme auf die matri-lineare Abstammung sei ein wichtiger Hinweis auf die Errichtung einer neuen Dynastie. Wie wir bei den Bemerkungen zu *amma turna* (Kap. 2.2)

gesehen haben, ist es aber nicht sicher, ob diese Wendung ‚meiner Mutter wegen‘ bedeutet. So oder so ist die Wendung für den elamischen Textbestand einmalig (vgl. ElW S. 51 s. v. *am-ma*) und deshalb nicht sehr aussagekräftig.

b) die Segenswünsche für Angehörige [4C, V und 4B, III]

Malbran-Labat (1995: 204) schreibt, Glückwünsche an die Familie seien vielleicht dann ausgesprochen worden, wenn die Dynastie bezüglich ihrer Gründung oder ihres Weiterbestehens in Frage gestellt worden sei. Man muss dem aber entgegenhalten, dass andere Herrscher, die aus ihrer Abstammungslinie nicht ausscherten, ebenfalls Segenswünsche an ihre Angehörigen formuliert haben, wie die folgende Aufstellung zeigt:

Herrscher	Anteil Inschriften mit Familienglückwünschen	Belege
Kutir-Nahhunte	1 von 3 Inschriften	EKI 31 V.
Šilhak-Inšušinak	9 von 27 Inschriften	EKI 33 II; 40 IV; 41 III; 44 III; 45 §5; 46 §11; 47 §13; 54 §12; 50 IV.
Huteluduš-Inšušinak	4 von 6 Inschriften	EKI 60 II; 62 II; 64 I; 65 II.

Tab. 1. Inschriften mit Glückwünschen an die eigene Familie.

Dass Humbannumenas Segenswünsche – Adressatinnen sind die Damen Mišimruh und Rišablan – ein Zeichen seien für Furcht vor der dynastischen Zukunft, ist also nicht wahrscheinlich. Falls aber Mišimruh tatsächlich Humbannumenas Gattin und Tochter des Kurigalzu I ist, liegt eine andere Interpretation nahe: Er wollte mit der Erwähnung seiner kassitischen Gattin (und der kassitisch-elamischen Tochter Rišablan?) die Verbundenheit der beiden Königshäuser betonen – ein Akt, der nicht wirklich auf eine „double monarchie“ hinweist, da sich auch Herrscher der westlichen (susianischen) Dynastie gerne mit Kassitinnen vermählten: Humbannumenas Onkel Pahir-iššan mit der Schwester von Kurigalzu I, Untaš-Napiriša mit der Tochter des Burna-Buriaš und Kidin-Hutran II mit einer [...]duniaš (vgl. Abb. 3)⁹.

⁹ Für eine Übersicht über die 16 dynastischen Heiraten mit elamischer Beteiligung siehe Mäder (demnächst), Tab. 1.

c) Die Installierung einer neuen Krone in Liyan [4C, IV]

Potts (1999: 211) schreibt: „[Humbannumena] seems to claim that Inshushinak granted him kingship once he had re-established prosperity and restored the crown. Claims like these are unlikely to have been made if his accession to the throne of his father had been a smooth one.“ Er stützt sich auf die Übersetzung ‚la prospérité⁷ établie, la couronne restaurée⁸‘ (Malbran-Labat 1995: 59). Eine Überarbeitung dieser Stelle (s. Kommentar zu *tak-(ú-)me en*, S. 6) stellt dieses Argument in Frage: Das Wort *me-en* ‚Krone‘ existiert nicht.

d) Die Änderung von Humbannumenas Titulatur

Humbannumena hiess nicht überall „König von Anšan und Susa“ (wie in seiner eigenen Inschrift 4C), sondern wurde in einem akkadischen Text, in welchem er erwähnt wird, (MDAI LIII 4, S. 14) auch „König von Susa und Anšan“ genannt. Auch sein Vater Attar-kittah war „König von Susa und Anšan“. Kidin-Hutran I hingegen war ausschliesslich „König von Anšan und Susa“ (wie sein Vater Pahir-iššan genannt wurde, wissen wir nicht). Daraus schliesst Enrique Quintana (1996: 93) „que les deux parties du royaume élamite étaient contrôlées par deux rois différents, la Susiane gouvernée par la branche d’Attar-Kittah, et le Fars par celle de Pahir-iššan.“ Die in der Titulatur erstgenannte Stadt wäre also der eigentliche Regierungssitz, die zweitgenannte lediglich ein Verweis auf die Gesamtheit Elams. Humbannumenas Wechsel von „Susa und Anšan“ (MDAI LIII 4, S. 14) zu „Anšan und Susa“ (4C, II) erkläre sich durch einen „Sieg“ Humbannumenas über Kidin-Hutran I. Quintana vermutet also einen Disput zwischen Kidin-Hutran I aus Anšan und seinem Cousin Humbannumena aus Susa, den der letztere für sich entschieden habe. Und nachdem er den Regierungssitz ins Elamische Hochland verlegt habe, habe er „Anšan“ vorangestellt. Quintana sieht seine These erstens bestätigt in Malbran-Labats (1995: 59) Übersetzung von Satz IV ‚la couronne restaurée⁹‘, die wir bereits als falsch erkannten, zweitens in einer dem Humbannumena attestierten „rupture des liens de famille; Humbannumena devient alors le *ruhushak* Silhaha (EKI 39 m p. 91 note 2)“. Die Neugründung von Dur-Untash durch Humbannumenas Sohn Untaš-Napiriša könnte, so schliesslich Quintana, im Zusammenhang mit der Legitimation in der Region Anšan stehen. Die Argumentation ist aus folgenden Gründen problematisch:

- Es wäre der einzige bekannte Fall, in dem die Reihenfolge genannter Städte einen Hinweis auf Regierungs- respektive annektierte Stadt geben würde. Überdies nennen sich fast alle mittelelamischen Könige „König von Anšan und Susa“, obwohl die meisten von ihnen in Susa regiert haben.
- In Inschrift 4B, 1 nennt sich Humbannumena selber *EŠŠANA Šu-ši u An-za-an*, obwohl die Inschrift nicht aus Susa stammt, sondern aus Liyan. Es scheint sich also viel eher so zu verhalten, dass Humbannumena in akkadischen Texten (4B und MDAI, LIII) Susa und im elamischen Text (4C) Anšan an den Anfang der Titulatur stellt. Anhand von nur drei Texten kann dies aber nicht entschieden werden, deshalb bleibt die Frage offen.
- Es ist nicht ersichtlich, weshalb die Rangfolgebezeichnung *ruhušak* ‚Schwestersohn‘ gerade hier eine „rupture des liens de famille“ bedeuten soll.
- Quintana geht davon aus, dass die Inschrift 4C jünger sei als jene in MDAI LIII 4. Es ist aber wohl nicht zu entscheiden, welche der Inschriften innerhalb der ca. zwanzigjährigen Regentschaft Humbannumenas (Yusifov 1976: 323) älter ist.
- Falls Humbannumena tatsächlich von Susa aus eine „annexion d’Anshan“ (Quintana 1996: 93) durchgeführt haben soll, wieso verlegte er seine Bautätigkeit nach Liyan?

Auch dieses letzte, sehr ausführliche Argument ist also nicht stichhaltig.

6. Fazit

Die berühmte und oft zitierte Usurpator-These, wonach Humbannumena unrechtmässig an die Macht gelangt sei, beruht hauptsächlich auf einer Interpretation von *me-en* ‚Krone‘. Allerdings existiert dieses Wort im Elamischen nicht, stattdessen gehört *me* an der strittigen Stelle (EKI 4C, IV) zum vorangehenden *takkime* ‚Leben‘ und *en* ist wohl ein Verbalpräfix bzw. eine demonstrative Präposition des nachfolgenden *en(-)pišši-k* ‚dazu festgelegt‘. Viel eher ist Humbannumena in die Igihalkiden-Dynastie einzuordnen, er regierte nach seinem Vater und vor seinem Sohn. Ob dies der gängigen Erbfolge widersprach oder nicht (d.h. zuerst sein Onkel an der Reihe gewesen wäre), kann nicht festgestellt werden, denn in der Igihalkiden-Dynastie wurde sowohl an den Bruder wie auch an den Sohn vererbt.

Für die Vermutung, Humbannumena habe in Liyan oder Anšan eine zweite Dynastie gegründet, d.h. ein Herrscherhaus, das gleichzeitig mit jenem in Susa bestanden hätte, gibt es einige Hinweise. Sie reichen aber auch in ihrer Gesamtheit nicht aus, um die These zu beweisen. Sicher ist, dass der mittelelamische Herrscher uns drei Inschriften hinterlassen hat: Zwei in akkadischer Sprache (wobei eine mit archaisierenden Zeichen geschrieben wurde), und eine in elamischer Sprache. Letztere ist eines der längsten, schönsten und vor allem hinsichtlich ihrer Verbalmorphologie interessantesten elamischen Schriftzeugnisse überhaupt.

7. Abkürzungen

A	Ein grossgeschriebener A in Morphembeschrieben bezeichnet vokalharmonisches Verhalten. So kann z.B. (A)k je nach Stammvokal <i>ak</i> , <i>ek</i> oder <i>ik</i> lauten.
AE	steht bei Khačikjan (1998) für RAE.
BK	Bindekonsonant.
CIE	Corpus Inscriptionum Elamitarum, s. König 1926.
CON	Konnektivpartikel (vgl. Khačikjan 1998: 17).
EKI	Die elamischen Königsinschriften, s. König 1965.
EIW	Elamisches Wörterbuch, s. Hinz & Koch 1987.
Int. pr.	Interrogativpronomen.
KSN	Klassensuffix der Abstrakta/Neutra (vgl. Khačikjan 1998: 15).
KSPL	Klassensuffix Plural (vgl. Khačikjan 1998: 15).
KS1	Klassensuffix 1. Person, siehe z.B. Grilhot-Susini (1987: 13), Reiner (1969: 91).
ks3	Klassensuffix 3. Pers. sg. (vgl. Khačikjan 1998: 15).
MDAI	Mitteilungen des Deutschen Archäologischen Instituts.
MDP	Mission de la Délégation Perse.
ME	mittelelamisch.
Morph.	Morphemanalyse.
NE	neuelamisch.
PP	Partizip Perfekt.
RAE	achämenidenelamisch (Royal Achaemenid Elamite).
Rel.pr.	Relativpronomen.
Transkr.	Transkription.
Translit.	Transliteration.
Übers.	Übersetzungsvorschlag.
ZATU	Zeichenliste der archaischen Texte aus Uruk, s. Green & Nissen 1987.
3.SG	Personalsuffix 3. PERS. SG. in Verben.

8. Literatur

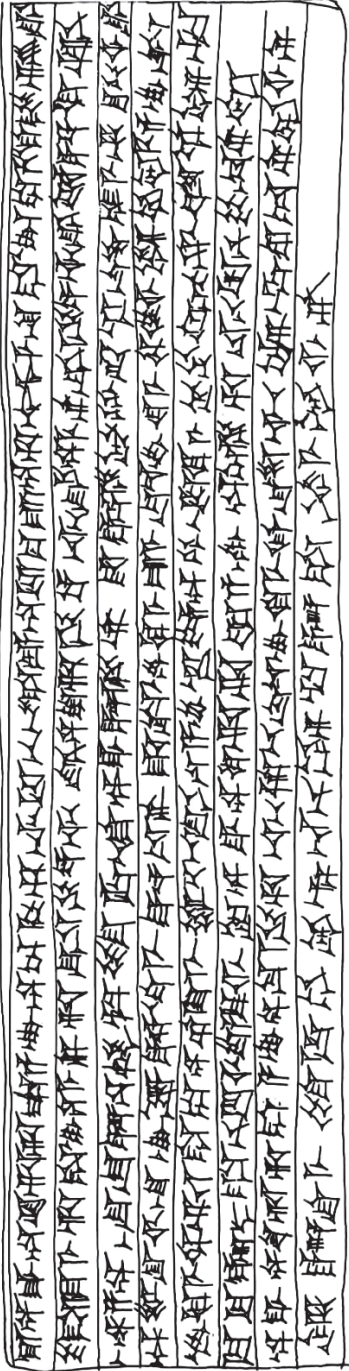
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Anhang: Abbildung und Abzeichnungen von EKI 4C

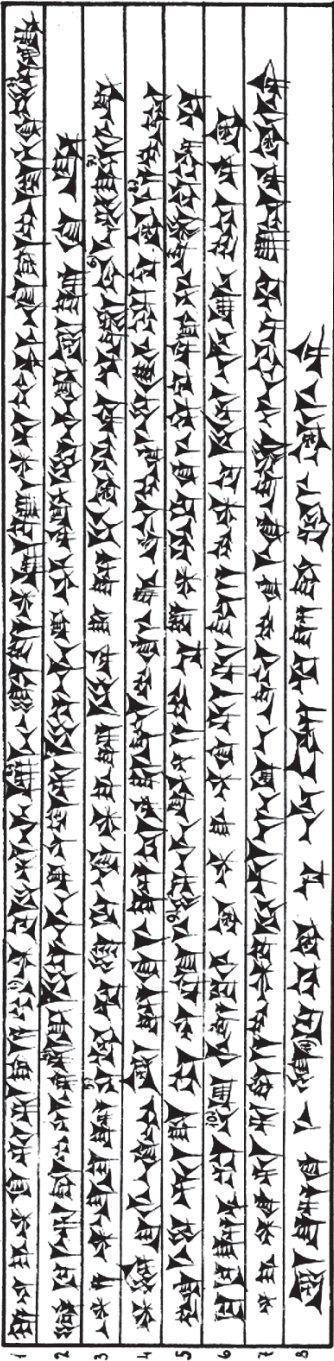


Taf. 1. Foto von Humb. 4C (IRS Br. 611) in Malbran-Labat 1995: 60.

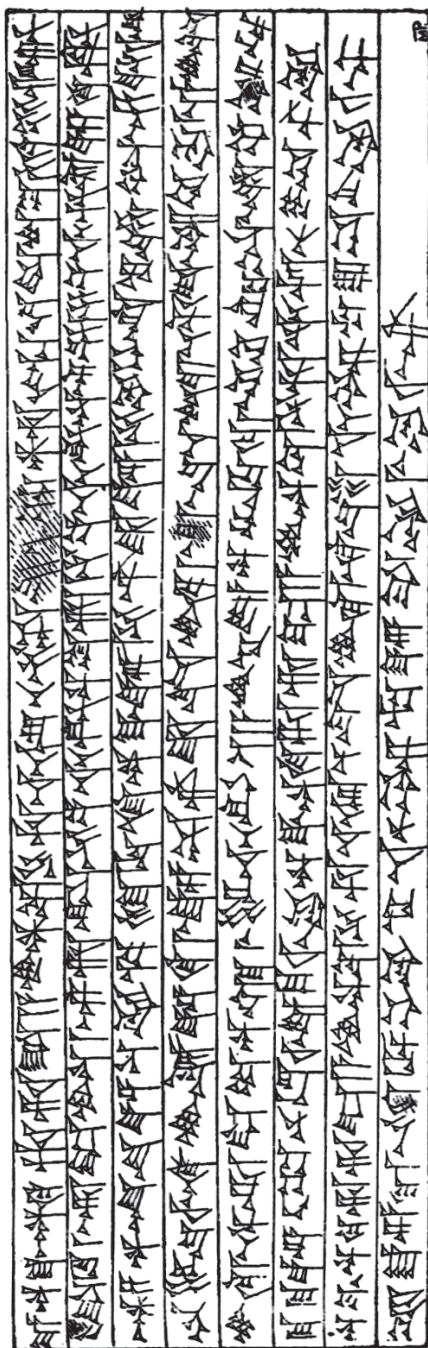


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Taf. 2. Abzeichnung in Malbran-Labat 1995: 60.



Taf. 3. Abzeichnung in CIE 1926: 4C.



Taf. 4. Abzeichnung in Pézard 1914: 43.